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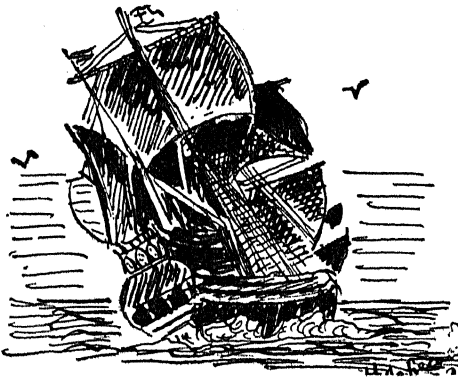
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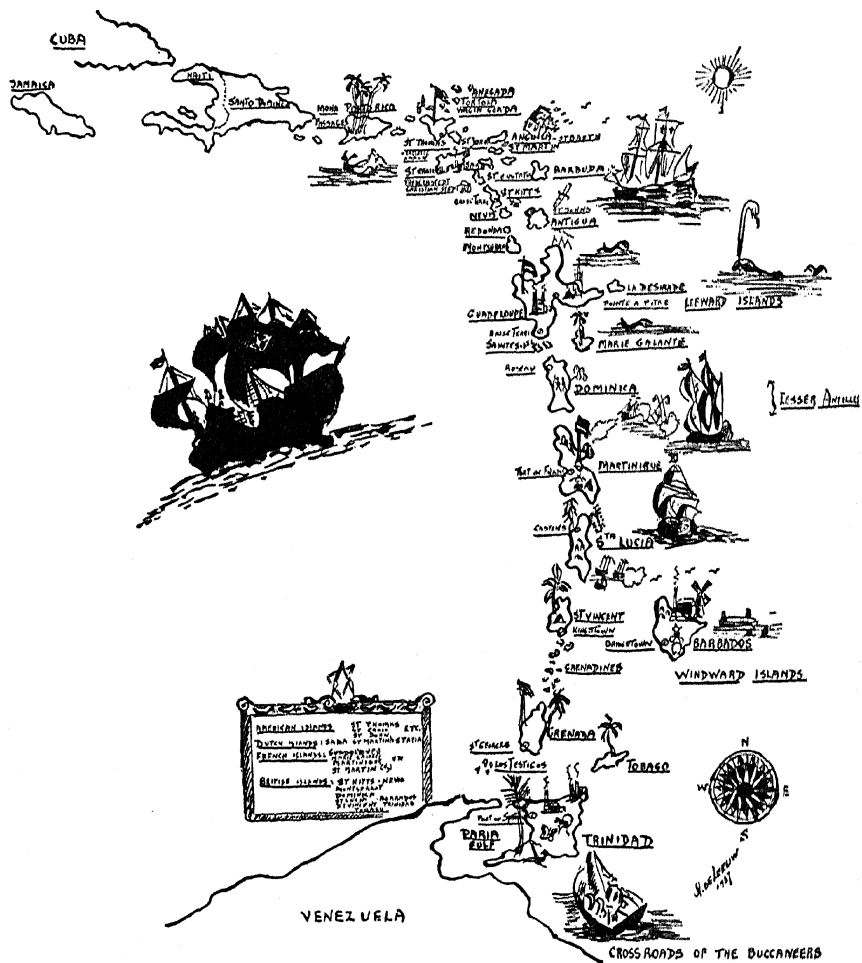
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MADE IN THE
UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA

TO BESS, MY WIFE
AB IMO PECTORE

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Saba

THE BUCCANEERS' NEST





“DON’T LEAVE THE CARIBBEAN BEFORE paying a visit to Napoleon’s cocked hat!”

These were the words His Excellency, Governor B. W. T. van Slobbe, uttered as we discussed my last Caribbean book. It was in this prosaic fashion that I was initiated into the wonders of that strange island that has eighty per cent women, and white women at that!

As the stalwart and congenial Curaçao Governor imparted that information to me, in his characteristic military-like manner, he regarded me with a whimsical smile, his frank eyes wandering from time to time to the rows of portraits of former governors adorning the quaint study’s walls and to the glaring, sun-kissed courtyard of Fort Amsterdam, below.

Haiti, Santo Domingo, Venezuela and the Guianas lay behind me. I had intended to set sail for home but the opportunity for a

visit to an island boasting eighty per cent women was most certainly an adventure not to be missed!

Quite often I had heard rumors and read stories of this majestic piton, this island inhabited by descendants of Holland buccaneers who, high above the sea, in the hollow of a volcano, had settled there long before the actual invasion of the Caribbean began.

"Eighty per cent women?" I asked cautiously.

"Eighty per cent women," came the Governor's reply, his gray eyes set in his sun-tanned face twinkling with obvious amusement. "Yet," he continued, "they are not what one would expect in a woman-controlled land. When I say woman-controlled, I merely mean to infer that it is an island where women predominate.

"Most interesting of all is the fact that, in one respect, Saba compares with Pitcairn Island in that a great portion of its inhabitants are descendants of buccaneers and mutineers. Not with the same background, however, because the Saba people have religiously adhered to their standard of maintaining that purity of race which makes miscegenation a thing totally unknown on that island. In fine, Saba is an anomaly, having more women than men, more colored people than white, yet a record of a steady, though small, increase in its population.

"When I referred to the great preponderance of women over men," the Governor continued, as he ordered his secretary to supply me with the Year Book issued on the occasion of Curaçao's Three Hundredth Anniversary Celebration, which tells also about Saba, "I should have stated that they seem to be well satisfied with their lot. And now," added the Governor as the interview drew to a close, "go and see for yourself."

Decidedly, I was intrigued. Having read the chronicle of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten's voyages, which includes mention of his stop at Saba, and having been mightily attracted thereby, the last factor necessary to influence my decision to go was a post card that I received from that distinguished gentleman, Mynheer Muhlenfeld, who, while on an inspection tour of the Caribbean possessions for his government, recommended Saba very highly to me. Thus, my mind was made up: I would visit Saba at the first opportunity.

Fortunately for me a small freight-and-passenger steamer plying

between Curaçao and the Windward-Leeward Islands group would be leaving on the following Saturday and I decided to book on it.

But first, let me locate Saba a little more definitely, since scarcely one in every ten persons to whom I mentioned Saba seemed to know of its existence; and if he did, was either hazy about it or unable to locate it geographically.

If you will look at a map of the West Indies, you will notice that the island of Saba lies almost on a line between the island of St. Croix or Santa Cruz, to the west, and the Holland-controlled island of St. Eustatius, to the east. It is so small, one might easily pass it by unnoticed.

Geologically, the island of Saba owes its appearance above the water level to a fold in the sea crust and is a tiny speck in the midst of that great chain of islands, extending from the coast of Florida to the northeast shores of South America, that lies almost astride what we are wont to call the Trade Routes to the Panama Canal and enclosing, or encompassing, the Caribbean Sea.

Saba and the rest of these islands in the Leeward-Windward chain may have been the summits of the Caribbean Andes, that mighty range of mountains and hills which in a very distant age may have united the Americas but of which parts may have been submerged by a cataclysm as violent as nature has ever experienced, and which allowed others to remain standing with their cones just above the ocean. Saba is one of those cones—as are the rest of the islands in the Leeward and Windward group.

It is a familiar fact that in the geologic ages the earth's crust was subject to upheavals and a cooling process that resulted in enormous changes in levels remaining above the water. In the equatorial regions, where radiation of the earth's internal heat was slowest and where the earth's diameter, transverse to its axis, was greatest, the changes were naturally also the greatest. It was this upheaval, where this island archipelago is now located, that made of that region at one time a continuation of the continents, providing for broad plains upon the west and occupying what we now know as the basins of the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico.

There must have existed at that time also a connection of these lands with the Pacific, over one or more of the depressions now

known as the Isthmuses of Tehuantepec, Nicaragua and Panama. The level of the western verge of the continent was decidedly lower than it is today. Somewhat later in that earlier age of which I speak there happened a tilting of this broad tract of the earth's crust which forced the Antilles region to a lower level than that of the present age.

The plains, which may have had lakes then, were converted into the basins of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, and the plateaus became the higher levels of the ocean floor. The valleys between them became chasms in the great deep, and the mountain ridges and peaks were left above. Hence the plateau upon whose elevations and projections the Bahamas are built is now a continuation of the great American continents, extending from Florida all the way eastwards to another edge, with steep escarpment, dipping to the ocean's depth of more than ten thousand feet. It is upon this that we locate the banks and ridges and mounts, some of which come to the surface as islands.

It then became the work of the tireless coral builders, joining forces with those of erosion and deposits, to modify the outlines that resulted in isles, reefs and calcareous rocks—the smaller and the larger Antilles.

The channels that cut the Greater Antilles apart, the Windward Passage and the Mona Passage, for instance, between Santo Domingo and Porto Rico, were nonexistent in that remote era before the submergence. . . .

Properly speaking, Saba, first landfall, as it were, of my meandering visits to these Windward-Leeward Islands, lies off the main current of Caribbean Sea traffic. However, for those who are willing and fortunate enough to make this mysterious island their landfall also, a vessel calls there every tenth day of the month, while the more affluent may, of course, get there as many Americans now do, either by their own yachts or by hiring a schooner from St. Martin, from the Virgin Islands or from St. Kitts.

Because of general inaccessibility, this island, which it is not amiss to compare, in one respect, to Pitcairn Island, has remained practically *terra incognita*, and unspoiled, and has become one

of the few, if not the only, remaining mystery islands in this hemisphere.

All around Saba—to the north and east, south and west—lie clusters of lofty islets and rocks whose general appearance excites the most pleasing and lively emotions. Their blue summits rise one after another out of the sea. Picturesquely grouped, their numerous channels, small bays and rocky projecting points, with tropical growths and trees and shrubs, cultivated plantations and groves of palms that fringe the beaches, with white rolling surf, present views of extraordinary beauty and magnificence.

Saba, however, from the outside, seems but a barren mountain or volcanic cone, uninviting to the eye, and as for a visit . . .

The sun rose, like a golden ball, over the Holland-like houses of Curaçao's waterfront and changed the long dock, to which the vessel was moored, into a dancing pool of light, until it began to play its rays against the tiny ship on which I had booked passage to Saba, St. Eustatius and St. Martin, the last vestiges of what was once Holland's greatness in the Windward Islands region.

It makes me smile now as I think of that ship that looked such a tiny mite—so small beside such giants as the "Rotterdam," "Lafayette," "Kungsholm," "Champlain," "Empress of Australia" and "Aquitania"—all visitors to Curaçao at the time of our sailing. Her name meant little to me, except that she was seaworthy and carried a cargo of stores.

Making my way aft, trying to get a peek at my companions in the clear sunlight, I found the red-haired captain, who looked like a little barrel, talking in his most pleasant manner (though not without real effort) to two gentlemen of the cloth.

We were to have illustrious and rare company on this Caribbean voyage: His Eminence, the dignified, amiable Monsignor, Bishop Verriet, and Frater Waelen, his rotund, smiling and pleasant amanuensis, or secretary, who proved to be the most congenial traveling companions that I had had in many Caribbean moons.

As I pondered the vessel's seaworthiness in time of a storm, and felt again the strange and magnetic spell that large and small ships alike manage to cast over me, first one, then two and finally three blasts quickly awakened me from my musings. Noises accompany-

ing the vessel's departure became clearer and she began to shake from stem to stern. There was a rattling of pulleys, a creaking of ropes in blocks, a clanking of chains and a grunting of machinery in the engine room; slowly the ship began to move and the hull of the pigmy was seized by the waves.

Curaçao's quaint waterfront, with the bright warm sunshine beating down upon its dock, its house tops and the Fort, was lost sight of once we rounded the bend, while the oldest lullaby of all—that of the playful, choppy waves—soon drowned out the jumbled noises from the shore.

With the low, rocky island disappearing from view, an active wind set a swell against the tub, causing quite a roll, which did not, however, result in diminishing the attendance in the ship's saloon below where captain, officers and passengers all would be taking their meals together, in one grand family fashion.

It was in this sanctuary, where at times we had gone to repair our shattered nerves, a condition brought about by the rocking of the boat, and where, through the use of various delectables and nostrums we assuaged the wear and tear upon our bodies, that the good Bishop and his no less genial factotum, the Frater, imparted to me a wealth of information pertaining to Saba that otherwise I might have had small chance to learn.

Now, it must be said that there are innumerable ways of passing the time pleasantly when sailing the brine on a large passenger liner, but when it comes to a small vessel, what more pleasant pastime than to indulge in good food and light chatter? Food and love make the world go 'round, so the saying goes, but on this ship it was good food and chatter—and to eat wisely and to talk and to listen attentively is as instructive a pastime as any I have experienced.

Frater Waelen was the typical Frater one sees so often depicted on cloister paintings—a smiling, pleasant man, fond of practical jokes. Rotund and robust, with a twinkle in his eye, remarkably clever and versatile, his pockets always bulging with papers and pamphlets, and as witty a story teller as any, here was a man who was bound to capture and hold the attention of all of us, once we were privileged to listen to him. To me, Pater Waelen seemed like his famous confrere, Père Labat, of a century and a half ago, who,

according to the records, was one of the most remarkable compounds of knowledge, science and erudition that one is ever likely to encounter all in one man.

It was quite natural that my thoughts and conversation invariably would revert to the island of Saba: Whence it derived its name, when its first settlers came to inhabit the island, and who they were and what they did.

"Is it true," I asked the Frater, "that Saba is compared to Pitcairn Island, and that Columbus landed there? Is it equally true that the Sabians, according to historical records, are descended either from the Dutch or British, or the Swedish? And one more question: Whence do the Leeward and Windward Isles derive their names?"

"I have heard that Columbus may have landed there," the Frater replied. "Unfortunately, as Napoleon once said, 'History is not at all clarified by time'—by which I mean that once a mistake creeps into the history books, as one of our popular historians so often has said, it remains there forever and ever. Such errors may be modified but are seldom, if ever, entirely corrected for posterity's enlightenment. But let me answer the questions in their order, as you put them:

"It is true, Saba reminds one much of Pitcairn, as you will discover for yourself, though it had no 'Mutiny of the Bounty,' no Bligh and no Tahitian women to earn for it an immortal name.

"Now, Mynheer de Leeuw, to get a clearer picture, let us scan the pages of history just a little more closely"; and gazing at me from across the table with his canny bright eyes set like carbuncles in his round face, he paused for a moment, took a long puff at his straw-like Dutch cigar, emitted a gurgling chuckle and, thoroughly refreshed, continued: "No spot in all the West Indies is quite like Saba, for it is the strangest and most interesting of all the islands that I have visited in my career as secretary to Monsignor. Saba is the most westerly of the three massive volcanic cones (the other two being St. Martin and St. Eustatius) belonging to Holland's West-Indian domain, and is said to have been sighted by Christopher Columbus at one time, although he never visited the island.

"As you undoubtedly remember, from your history books, it was on a Friday, August 3rd, in the year of our Lord 1492, that the great mariner, with that aureole of ambition playing around his

head, left the small port of Palos with three little vessels. After calling at the Canary Islands he ventured forth upon the unexplored regions and waters to the west.

"Across the track of that voyage lay the two great continents (this may be accepted as historical fact) then unknown, except to Columbus, who was aware of their existence, since he had had access to the records and maps of explorations of the Viking navigators. Many of us do not know that Adam of Bremen, in the year 1075, proclaimed the discovery of the New World by the Norsemen in the year 1000. Both Columbus and Cabot must have drawn their knowledge of the existence of a western land from the Vikings, since Columbus went to Iceland in the year 1477 and Cabot did the same, in quest of further information. From the information thus gained, both voyagers followed the Norsemen's course. Iceland, as we all know, was colonized by Viking settlers, one of whom was Leif Ericsson, the possible first-known discoverer of the New World. Henri Vignaud, biographer of Columbus, stated definitely that the famous Genoese knew that western land existed, and also knew exactly how many days it would take him to reach there.

"We may even have to go back before that time, when the area of this New World was known to the oldest cosmographers as the Antilla or Antiglia, a mythical continent said to exist east of the Azores, with Jamaica, Cuba, Santo Domingo and Porto Rico in the Greater Antillas, and the islands from Trinidad to Sombrero, in the smaller chain, known as the Lesser Antillas.

"Withal, this was not an entirely new world. For ages, the St. Laurence (St. Lawrence River), the Mississippi and the Amazon had been draining the great valleys. Dusky tribes roamed the forests that bounded the Rocky Mountains, the Cordilleras and the Andes, and had built rude splendor in Mexico and Peru, as well as in the great islands that included the basins of the double sea.

"Of all this the navigator must have had knowledge when he set sail upon what was generally believed to be a limitless waste of waters.

"He may have been disturbed by the variations of the magnetic needle. He may have been astounded by the floating fields of marine verdure, as they amaze us even today, in the vast Sargasso

Sea. He may even have marveled at the steady pull of the trade winds and he may have delighted in, and stood in awe at, the sight of land which historians and cartographers had had him believing to be those of the Indies he sought.

"We may as well ignore all the controversies that existed then, even as they exist today, about what he actually believed or did not believe. The fact remains that he arrived! Naturally, he could not foretell how great this discovery was later to become—that he was actually making history.

"We do know that he had been steering straight for the northern entrance to the Gulf of Mexico through the Bahamas, and that, coming upon an island which the natives called Guanahani, he renamed it San Salvador—about which there had also been endless controversy. This island is now named Watling Island. We have learned that he did not linger there long, as he had important business to do and his task was by no means finished as yet. Skirting the island's western coast, which was then called Santa Maria de la Concepcion (now known as Petit Anse, in northern Haiti), the great mariner, with three caracks and fourteen caravels and sixteen hundred men, set out, after his return to Spain, on what we now know as his Second Voyage of Discovery.

"The land first sighted then was called Deseada (the desired), now known as Desirade. Then followed Marie Galante, named for the vessel the *almirante* commanded, and the cluster of islands which he came upon on All Saints' Day he called Los Cantos. Next came what we know today as the French Islands: Les Saintes; Dominica, a larger island to the south was next on the list, with a much larger island, now known as Guadeloupe, to the north, so named for the Santa Maria de Guadeloupe, in Estramadura, Spain.

"Continuing northward, he named Montserrat after a mountain near Barcelona upon which there was a famous monastery. Then followed Antigua, named also after a famous monastery, Santa Maria la Antigua, near Valladolid.

"Having an eye for beauty, and coming within view of an island whose charming aspect delighted him much, he gave it the name of St. Christopher, in honor of his Patron Saint, which island is now commonly called St. Kitts. His next discovery was the island of St. Martin, or San Martin, as it was called by him. Follow-

ing that came Santa Cruz, and then a whole procession of islands which he named The Virgins, reminiscent as they were, to him, of St. Ursula and the unfortunate Eleven Thousand Maidens.

"And it was on this part of his voyage that the Admiral sighted the somber, uninviting-looking, almost uninhabited volcanic cone, the island of Saba.

"It was Juan de la Cosa, called the most expert mariner and pilot of his age, who accompanied Columbus on his second voyage and who, in the year 1500, executed a map known as 'A Portolan Chart of the World.' This map has been housed in Madrid. [It is to be hoped that at this moment of writing—what with the present conflagration in Madrid—this valuable document will have been given a safer asylum.] Of oxhide, and superbly illuminated in color, this map seems to have been the oldest-known map of the New World since 1492, although it may be a fact that de la Cosa had copied his American Coast portion from the Cabot map, long since lost.

"It is this map of de la Cosa, which may or may not have been patterned after Cabot's map, that shows the island of Saba for the very first time. Why Columbus or his men did not land there you will soon find out for yourself, when you behold that conical, rockbound, precipitous and forbidding coast rising sheer from the very waves.

"This may close the first milestone in Saba's earlier life, as far as our historical knowledge goes. If at that time there were people living there—some believe they were Carib Indians; others point to an extinct aboriginal race—whatever they were, the one fact definitely remains that since Columbus' time no Conquistador ever set foot on or approached the then-considered-barren rock within even a few miles."

Let us take leave of the good Frater for a while and tarry long enough to see what happened when Columbus, then already walking on clouds of joy, returned to Spain and reported what he had discovered to his King.

Many of you will undoubtedly be acquainted with the now famous letter written by Christopher Columbus concerning the islands he discovered in the Indian Sea and which he addressed to the Treasurer of Ferdinand, the Spanish King. This letter, recording the earliest information of his discoveries, to which we owe so

much, was translated from the Latin on the 3rd of May 1493; and copies of the oldest editions, printed in 1493, have been preserved in the Lenox Library in New York. The rarest and most treasured copy, however, is the pictorial edition, complete in ten leaves, whose curious woodcut illustrations are supposed to have been copied by someone from drawings made originally by Columbus.

Though not wanting to burden the reader with too much detail about this interesting document, I am permitting myself the pleasure of referring to a few outstanding passages, inasmuch as they illustrate so graphically what the great mariner discovered, and at the same time bear on what is to follow in these pages. To quote Columbus:

“On the thirty day after I departed from Cadiz, I came to the Indian Sea, where I found many islands inhabited by men without number, of which I took possession for our most fortunate King, with proclaiming heralds and flying standards, no one objecting. * * * To the first of these I gave the name of the blessed Saviour, on Whose aid I had relying reached this as well as the other islands. But the Indians call it Guanahany. * * * As soon as we had arrived at that Island [*Juana*] which I have just now said was called Juana, I proceeded along its coast towards the West for some distance; I found it so large and without perceptible end, that I believed it to be not an island, but the Continental country of Cathay [*China*]. * * * From this place, I saw another island to the East, distant from this Juana 54 miles, which I called forthwith Hispana [*Haiti and Santo Domingo*] and I sailed to it. * * * This Hispana, moreover, abounds in different kinds of spices, in GOLD, and in METALS. * * * On this island indeed, and on all the others which I have seen, and of which I have knowledge, the inhabitants of both sexes go always naked, just as they came into the world, except some of the women, who use a covering of a leaf or some foliage. * * * They show greater love for all others than for themselves; they give valuable things for trifles. * * * It happened, indeed, that a certain sailor obtained in exchange for a shoe strap as much worth of gold as would equal three golden coins * * * and I gave to them many beautiful and pleasing things that I had

brought with me, no value being taken in exchange, in order that I might more easily make them friendly to me, that they might be made worshipers of Christ, and that they might be full of love towards our King, Queen, and Prince, and the whole Spanish nation; also that they might be zealous to search out and collect, and deliver to us those things of which they had plenty, and which we greatly need. * * * I seized by force several Indians on the first island, in order that they might learn from us, and in like manner tell us about those things in these lands of which they themselves had knowledge; and the plan worked for we understood them and they us * * * yet always believing that I descended from Heaven, * * * wherever we landed, continually proclaiming to the others in a loud voice, 'Come, come, and you will see the Celestial people,' * * * I found no monstrosities among them, as very many supposed, but men of great reverence, and friendly. Nor are they black like the Ethiopians."

And further on, while referring to another island (identified as Dominica) Columbus wrote:

"I did not see any monstrosity, nor did I have knowledge of them anywhere, excepting a certain island, named Charis [*Dominica*], which is the second in passing from Hispana to India. This island is inhabited by a certain people, who are considered very warlike by their neighbors. These eat human flesh. The said people have many kinds of rowboats, in which they cross over to all the other Indian islands, and seize and carry away everything that they can. * * * On this account they are considered warlike, wherefore the other Indians are afflicted with continual fear, but I regard them as of no more account than the others. These are the people who visit certain women, who alone inhabit the island Mateunin [*supposed to be Martinique*]. * * * Finally that I may compress in few words the brief account of our departure and quick return, and the gain, I promise this, that if I am supported by our most invincible Sovereigns with a little of their help, as much gold can be supplied as they will need, indeed as much of spices, of cotton, of chewing gum (which is only found in Chios), also as much of aloes wood, and as many slaves for the Navy as their Majesties

will wish to demand. * * * Truly great and wonderful is this, and not corresponding to our merits, but to the holy Christian religion and to the piety and religion of our Sovereigns, because what the human understanding could not attain, that the Divine Will has granted to human efforts. For God is wont to listen to His servants who love His precepts, even in impossibilities, as has happened to us on the present occasion, who have attained that which hitherto mortal men have never reached. For if any one has written or said anything about these islands, it was all with obscurities and conjectures; no one claims that he had seen them; from which they seemed like fables. * * * Therefore let the King and Queen, the princes and their most fortunate Kingdoms, and all other countries of Christendom give thanks to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who has bestowed upon us so great a victory and gift. Let religious processions be solemnized; let sacred festivals be given; let the churches be covered with festive garlands. Let Christ rejoice on earth, as He rejoices in Heaven, when He foresees coming to salvation so many souls of people hitherto lost. Let us be glad also, as well on account of the exaltation of our Faith, as on account of the increase of our temporal affairs, of which not only Spain but universal Christendom will be partaker. These things that have been done and thus briefly related. Farewell. Lisbon, the day before the Ides of March [March 14th, 1493].

“Christopher Columbus, Admiral of the Ocean Fleet.”

For the sake of clarity let us bear in mind that Columbus, as we have reason to believe from what history tells us, seemed to labor under the delusion that the islands of Hispana and Cuba, referred to in his letter, were those of the rich Cipangu, as defined by Marco Polo, and the paradise believed to lie in the East, he visualized somewhere off the Spanish American coast.

It is hardly necessary to say that his discoveries caused little stir outside the Court of the Kings, with the ignorant people at large remaining unmoved. It was quite different with the foreign emissaries at the Spanish Court, however; for when they learned of his discoveries and with eager eyes scanned the reports, which they in turn transmitted home, it doubtless stirred these other nations to accelerating their own explorations. They saw the handwriting on

the wall that, they realized, was to presage great doings in world movements. History, after all, was a sequence of momentous events, interrelated and presenting definite designs which, they realized, might change the future map of the world.

While all this may look pleurably exciting in the world history of those days, the real thrill came when Pope Alexander the Sixth fired the famous broadside, his Papal Bull, declaring that all the heathen lands then discovered, and those yet to be discovered, over that famous line across the face of the earth from north to south and a hundred leagues west of the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands, should rightfully belong to Spain, whereas all the rest could revert to Portugal. That indeed caused a veritable explosion and ushered in possibly a new epoch in history.

In fact, it was remarkable that the Spanish Empire had managed for so long to retain its empire overseas. This was due primarily to its monopoly of silver and gold which, in turn, were the magnets that lured the other nations to Spain's importance. Burdened with their guilt, as the Spanish navigators and Conquistadores were in those days for having exterminated the helpless Indians, and to gain their materialistic ends, retribution did not fail to exact its toll. Eventually it became the death-knell for the Spanish reign in these West Indies.

Less than a hundred years after the voyager, Cabot, received that astounding fee of Ten Pounds, with which Henry VII saw fit to reward him for his discovery of the North American main, the British appeared on the scene. Not satisfied with, or in defiance of, the Spanish Editt, the British engaged in piratical enterprises, as the Spanish termed them. The long wrangle reached its climax when Philip of Spain, notwithstanding he had his hands full in Holland and the New World, decided he would teach the pirates in England a lesson. We know, however, what happened to the Spanish Armada, one hundred and twenty-nine ships strong, as it appeared in the British offing in July, 1588. Philip failed in his designs on England; the Armada, in a lengthy and vigorous battle, was sent to kingdom come; and Spain's power, at least there, was smashed.

But there were other nations who could not let Spain and Portugal have the plum of the rich West-Indian pudding; their baleful

eyes had been on these sea lanes for some time. The French, for instance, not content with sitting idly by, decided to do a bit of exploring on their own, so that France actually became the first nation to openly defy Spain by inaugurating a regular system of colonization rather than having to depend on little bits here and there secured by piratical or buccaneering exploits. As early as the year 1555, many years before Saba received its first colonists, French Huguenots attempted a settlement in Brazil, even reaching to Florida and California on the North American main. Then followed the Dutch who, in this era of disputes and controversies, together with the men of Denmark, Prussia, Sweden and Russia, had come to the as yet sparsely populated regions, and, driving forth or exterminating the aborigines in the best, or rather, most ruthless manner that was the order of the day, secured, here and there, autonomy for themselves.

They were all pioneers in some fashion or another in this Caribbean Sea area, while their home offices and backers across the seas were rubbing their hands in impatient expectation of satiating their greed and lust for the yellow metal and other minerals and rich stores that, they had since learned, were there for the mere taking. Moreover, these pioneers were not imbued, like the Spanish, with the thought and compelling desire to bring the Gospel to the New World. That had been done by their worthy predecessors. Their business, instead, became that of aggrandizement and gain, with lust and glory thrown in for good measure.

From which, in face of all the foregoing, one must conclude that these earlier visitors, whether Don, Cossack, German, Briton, Dutchman or Swede, were no heavenly angels. Which brings me back to the Dutch once more, and especially to a town called Flushing, in Zeeland (Holland), which, in these days, had also indirectly to do with Saba's colonization.

In the gloomy counting houses of the enterprising Zeeland merchant burghers and shipbuilders, the expansion and success of the Spaniard had always been a source of wonderment (and, I may add, jealousy), and not without reason. These Hollanders were cognizant, in no small measure, that there must exist a veritable treasure-house in the New World. The Zeeuw Corsairs until those days, not unlike their French contemporary competitors, had in-

fested the narrow seas, being content with loot of ordinary wares. When, however, they got wind of Cortez' conquests in Mexico, their greediness knew no bounds and they decided that something ought to be done about it.

It was thus in the office of the Brothers Lampsins who, having fed for years on the jugular veins of the Crown, and disregarding entirely the Spaniards' claim that made of the Caribbean Sea region the *Mare Clausum*, that a momentous decision was reached: The Lampsins would take the bold and enterprising step that was to place Holland's Province of Zeeland—where the ancestors of the Roosevelts were most respectable burghers at about the same time—on the map of greater exploration.

The courageous, scrappy Lampsins thought lightly of the Spaniards' claim that prior discovery gave their Spanish brethren all the rights to the lands they had discovered beyond the sea. "No," said the Lampsins, who believed the new lands all meat for their pie, "we prefer to stick to our belief in the rights of the strong over the weak."

Hence it came to pass that in the small office on Flushing's waterfront, the Brothers Adriaan and Cornelis became busily engaged in mustering crews for their marauding ships, the "Nieuwe Geuzen" ("New Corsairs"). These ships set sail, and of them, after combat, one became lost and foundered. Its small crew, taking to a boat, managed to find shelter and a haven in Saba proper, as the records have shown.

Commenting on the "Nieuwe Geuzen," it was our traveling companion, the Bishop, who remarked:

"Even before the Lampsins' time—I believe it was during the tyrannical days of the Duke of Alva—there fled to England from a town in The Netherlands a family named Courteen, the father engaging in trade in London, where he prospered. Subsequently, his sons, William and Peter, entered into partnership, with William remaining in London, while Peter established himself in Middelburg, Zeeland. Quite in the regular course of their business the Courteens sent out privateers to prey upon the Spaniards, which was a favorite pastime in those days. It came to pass that in the year 1624 one of these Courteen privateers on its way home from Brazil, besides touching at Barbados, also reported at Saba.

"The first mass appearance of Hollanders in Saba's vicinity, however, occurred two years later, in the year 1626, when Pieter Pieterszoon Heyn, while in service of the Republic of the Seven United Provinces, passed Saba on his route, where many of his men stopped off.

"Ten years later the Council of Zeeland gave permission to a certain Jan Snouck, and Lettre to take possession of St. Eustatius and St. Martin, later including the island of Saba in the deal.

"Thirty years passed, during which the earliest Dutch colonists, left to their fate and practically cut off from the rest of the world, lived there, though we have to grope in the dark as to who these early settlers really were.

"As this Dutch contingent began to mature and grow on this barren rock of an island, and was helped, as we can surmise, by the womenfolk of the neighboring Dutch islands, it was left for later years, naturally, to witness additions to this original Saba stock from that most extraordinary lot of men and bizarre group of adventurers known to all mankind, the Buccaneers. So that," the Bishop concluded, "some of the Sabian people may even claim descent from the Scotch, or the Morgans, who may have been some of the privateers serving on these Buccaneer ships."

By adding the colored folk, who were brought over as slaves to work on Saba's plantations, one will have a fairly good picture of what people contributed to the growth of Saba's population.

Many historians and authors are responsible for the impression that Saba was populated, for the most part, by inhabitants from St. Eustatius, giving credence to a story that the Patroons (Governors) of neighboring St. Eustatius considered it well within their rights to seek domination over this volcanic island, so that in 1671 the islands of Saba and St. Eustatius were actually headed by one common governor. It is also conceded that before the year 1636 there had been fairly large settlements in these parts and that Saba had its own Patroon, who swayed scepter in the name of the West India Company.

For those who may want to know what is meant by "patroon," let me interpolate here that the Dutch Feudal Colony in Nieuw Amsterdam, and accordingly, also the Islands of Saba, St. Eustatius and St. Martin, were ruled by patroons. These were subject to

orders by the West India Company, who, in order to help the struggling colony along, presented it with a charter, in 1629, outlining the Privileges and Exemptions for the Patroons. These privileges, or the Charter's fundamental advantage, lay in a man's ability as a recruiting agent: For instance, whoever could secure fifty or more recruits to emigrate to the Colony from the home country would receive a grant of land and receive the rank of a Patroon.

Thus, feudal times were revived in the new land, whereas in the homeland, that these Hollanders had just left, feudalism had been buried years before. Under this system, each tenant was bound to live on his land, which he could not leave for at least ten years. It is true that each received livestock, a house and tools, but his lord and master, the Patroon, received his goodly—nay, his unduly large—share of all that the land produced. As time progressed, men became wiser themselves and also “wise to” the Patroons, and the feudal apple-cart was upset.

The *good* patroons of the Dutch islands in the West Indies worked along similar serf-like lines, for they all belonged to that great business enterprise, the enterprising West India Company.

At one time in Saba's career, the British took possession of the island when the Hollanders who had been living there removed themselves for a time to a neighboring island, St. Eustatius, while at another time in Saba's earlier history, half the island had actually been sold to the West India Company, as is proven by a deed executed in the year 1681, by one Cornelis Demetrius, for 3,140 Holland Florins (about \$2,000 in U. S. currency), while the other half was sold in 1683, for a like sum, by one Izaak van Pere.

Historians who have treated of Saba's history make light of, if they mention at all, the visit of that famed Priest, Père Labat, in 1693, who recorded the experiences of his long visit in his “Memoirs,” and who gave rise to the knowledge that Saba was inhabited by buccaneers. In his book, “Voyage du Père Labat aux Isles de l'Amerique,” issued at The Hague in 1724, he wrote of Saba as follows:

“Le Grand trafic de l'isle est de Souliers. Je n'ai jamais vu de pays si cordonnier. Le Gouverneur s'en mêle comme tous les autres et je crois que le Ministre se divertit à ce noble exercice à ces heures perdues. C'est dommage que cette île ne soit pas à des cordonniers Catholiques.

Ils la nommèrent sans doute l'île de S. Crispin. Il y avait parmi eux quelques réfugiés Français. J'achèterai six paires de Souliers qui étaient fort bons."

("The major industry of the island is in shoes. I have never seen such a shoemaking land. The Governor engages in it as do all the others, and I believe that the Parson kept himself engaged with that noble exercise in his free hours. It is a pity that this island did not belong to Catholic shoemakers. They would have called it (without doubt) the Isle of St. Crispin. There were among them some French refugees. I bought six pairs of shoes, which were very good.")

When Père Labat visited Saba he found, much to his surprise, a very pretty country. It was divided into four sections and inhabited by fifty settlers and their families, who maintained well-kept plantations and whose white-washed homes were quite pretty and well furnished within. He stated that he considered it a pity that "so little is known of the island's history," since whatever documents the Sabian people possessed may have been whisked up by a hurricane and blown out of the volcano bottom, where these people lived, across the wide seas. When this hurricane occurred, it took with it also every bit of human habitation, leaving only the tombs of the earliest settlers, and even these are very hard to find today.

Through some chain of circumstances, not clear unto this very day, some of the seventy buccaneers of the company of Colonel Morgan, upon possessing themselves of Saba, stayed there, and these, or part of them, may have added to the present stock of that island—although I often wondered where they got their women.

As for the origin of the name, Saba, it is likely that Columbus, upon sighting the island en route to Hispaniola, gave it the name in honor of St. Sabar. However, some travel-book writers have come forth with the fantastic tale which, like so many reports of those days that were embroidered and embellished and fed upon rumor, relates that Columbus may have wanted to honor the Queen of Sheba(?), of which the name, Saba, is a derivation. Believe it or not!

"Why these West Indian islands have to be known by two distinct group names is something for which we can blame the early Spanish voyagers," Frater Waelen ventured to inform us, "and if

my memory is correct, the larger islands to the north of the Mar Caribe were defined as 'Las Islas de Barlovento,' or Windward Islands; the Leewards were those east of it and given the name, 'Las Islas de Sotavento.' "

Something with reference to the origin of the names Leeward and Windward that the dear old Frater, and possibly many of us, may not know is that it was very likely our own United States that may have been responsible for knowledge of the reason for dividing these islands into the two groups, Leeward and Windward. Because in 1775, just one year before our Independence, an American Pocket Atlas was published here—a work that was just as fine as it was rare—in which we read that Desirade, ever since Columbus' memorable voyage, had always been taken as the first landfall by the other early voyagers. With the trade winds always hitting the islands from the east, it was axiomatic that all those spots situated to the north and the west were to become known as Leeward, while all those to the east and the south of this island were said to be situated windwards of the course of the Caravels; hence, Windward Islands. Today, however, these names are applied only to the British islands in the groups.

It was time for refreshments—especially for the Frater, whose parched palate certainly needed a little wetting after discoursing for more than an hour on the questions I had put to him. Good soul, knowing how eager I was for information, he wanted to be sure he left nothing out. What could be more fitting at this moment than to honor the cavalcade of the centuries' heroes by drinking a toast to them—either cognac or brandy-and-soda—prescribed by that Doctor, Samuel Johnson, as the proper drink for paying tribute to the merits and fame of the heroes of the ages.

It was pitch dark, barely five in the morning, as our vessel rounded the straits, when a towering black mass, grim and awe-inspiring, loomed like a specter out of the mysterious nowhere, rising sheer from the breakers amidst roaring and foaming waves.

We had arrived at Saba, Stromboli's replica, an extinct volcano, and no island in this region aroused such curiosity as this "home of the down-side-up"!

As it began to grow somewhat lighter, enabling us to distinguish its strange configuration better, the resemblance to Napoleon's cocked hat certainly became apparent. The lofty summit, at first completely lost in the low-hanging clouds of the trade wind, was accentuated with the advent of dawn.

The surf on the tiny strip of beach now could be better seen and heard, yet it was hard to believe that this rockbound and precipitously coasted island provided shelter for human habitation.

As our ship hove to slowly, we prudently careened well off the coast, as there were no safe anchorages near. We beheld a number of people running down what proved to be a long flight of steps, a stone ladder cut in the solid rock and leading from the first village through the wildest of mountain scenery down to the sandy patch on the shore.

From the verge of the sea-wall of this mighty precipice, the face of Saba seemed to incline up and backwards, like an embankment piled upon the masonry of a Cyclopean fortification. The ascent to the top of this conical peak, two thousand eight hundred feet high, by this ladder or by an almost impassable ravine on the southern side of the island would be considered "pie" for the best mountain climbers.

As the atmosphere became clearer—with the sun shining in all its glory—the coast, with its sharp, perpendicular cliffs and thundering surf and numberless rocks that made landing well-nigh impossible, appeared forbidding. As yet, there was no sign of a harbor or landing place.

Waiting for more than two hours, until the sea had become becalmed from its ugly mood, we spotted some men putting out in a small boat. We learned that landing could be done only by row-boat, and then only when the winds were moderate and the sea smooth.

A shack set well above the tide line, where a knot of people had gathered, was the custom house and the actual home of the "harbor-master," although, as it may have been inferred, Saba boasts of no harbor.

The Sabians, in this island of anomaly, have been veritable sea salts ever since they set foot here. Who, then, could be so mean as to begrudge them a harbor-master, even though they have no

harbor? These Sabians, so far as one is able to judge, are without exception the direct descendants of the earliest-known settlers, which might make this isle of isolation a true Martha's Vineyard for seamen's genealogy.

The pathway leading to the ravine seemed like a goat track, with men, women and children coming helter-skelter down the mountain crack. Still we could hardly believe that this apparently barren island, as was our first impression, gave refuge to the two thousand souls inhabiting its thriving villages, in houses huddled together in the crater of an extinct volcano.

By now the small boat had tied up to our vessel and baggage and freight were unceremoniously dumped in. We were rowed with great dexterity, one of the men towing a swimming cow that was to replenish Saba's livestock; and we came as close to shore as the waves permitted and the master seamen dared. Here, a number of colored men, wading up to their knees in the churning waves, grabbed the boat by the gunwales and pulled it, steering clear of the many sharp rocks, close to the diminutive, sandy strip of beach. Then, shaken up somewhat, we were lifted out, and carried on the backs, or hanging around the necks, as if with true affection, of our sturdy and friendly human conveyances, to be landed at last, safely ashore.

When I say safely I mean what I say, because we had been extremely fortunate that the weather was such as to enable us to land. I learned that sometimes, with the sea in its more unruly mood, it was well-nigh impossible to land at all; one had either to lay outside the breakwaters or go back to the ship.

The formalities over, having met the harbor-master, a colored constable and the latter's horse, Pete, who was to serve us faithfully and well (we hoped), we had our baggage and wares piled high on the shoulders and heads of the men and women on hand for this job.

Soon we were ready for the ascent of The Ladder which, upon closer acquaintance, proved to be a gigantic crack in a crater wall which, in ancient times, must have been the path by which lava streams found their way to the sea.

The first portion of our serpentine ascent was along the almost perpendicular sides of a ravine of great beauty. Thanks to the

attentions of the Gezaghebber, or acting head of the Netherlands Colonial Administration, the constable's horse, one of the only three existent on the island, was placed at our disposal, and was mounted by my wife. I managed at times to hang on to the horse's tail, my avoirdupois notwithstanding, puffing away and steadily wiping from my brow the perspiration which increased with the progress of the ascent.

Alas, the horse that had been graciously tendered my wife proved not such a docile equine and I changed places with her, she to do the puffing and the hanging on to the horse's tail.

In this manner, for a short stretch, we scaled The Ladder hewn out of stone, aiming for the top, to get to Bottom.

The wilderness of the place, the eight hundred stone steps of this veritable Jacob's Ladder, the thousand-foot climb, the goat-like-climbing porters and portresses, bearing loads of barrels of salt and molasses, bags of flour, boards and lumber on their heads and backs, and a mule or two loaded almost to exhaustion with the heavier pieces, ranging from loads of lumber to a bedstead and a kitchen stove, yet all ascending and descending nimbly and philosophically this precipitous causeway, seemed an experience so strange and delightful that we would not have missed it for anything in the world.

Then, about eight hundred feet up, we negotiated what proved to be the last bend, and there hove into view a toy village that was a delight to the eye, spread out on the floor of the ancient Sabian crater. This place called Bottom, but officially termed Leverick Town, is, as I have already said, 'way at the top—making its name seem both contradictory and ridiculous. A mile and a half in diameter, this Alpine-like village with tiny jigsaw houses, minus chimneys, freshly painted white with green shutters and red roofs, nestles in the bowels of the earth. Its streets were lined with walls or dikes, to guard against torrential outpourings. No two houses could be said to be alike. Each had its garden spot, small, I admit, but with snug little gates that seemed to fit, like everything else, in this sailor-made haven.

Panting and dripping, we stopped at the first house that we reached. It sported the diverting and familiar name of Bunker Hill Villa, where a couple of rosy-cheeked, blonde and blue-eyed lassies

(again an anomaly, as you will learn later) bade us welcome, in their best Saba manner, to this Lilliputian, spotless place.

At once there loomed another anachronism, as it were, because, while Saba is a Holland possession, we were addressed in perfect English.

Here, and in the two other villages higher up in the mountains, two thousand whites and a small colony of blacks (descendants of slaves and a Negro influx of more recent years) live together in perfect harmony and with what seemed to me an extraordinarily total absence of miscegenation, which makes this island different from Pitcairn.

But the greatest paradox of all, in this heart of a tropic region, was the fair skins and rosy cheeks of the young women, whose bloom may have come down from the period of England's earlier Kings or from the low lands of the Princes of Orange. The Sabians have kept their race pure and untarnished for more than three full centuries, but at a sacrifice—that of often-disastrous inbreeding, and which seems to have been the case since the island's inception. Because, upon reading Abbe Raynal's travel chronicle of the year 1798, I learned that "fifty European families, with about one hundred and fifty slaves, here raise cotton, spin it, make stockings of it and shoes and sell them to other colonies for as much as ten crowns, six dollars a pair." And then he goes on, "Throughout America there is no blood so pure as that of Saba . . . the women there preserve their freshness of complexion, which is not to be found in any other of the Caribbee lands." So spake the worthy Abbe Raynal, and so it has remained unto this very day.

The Sabians have solved the color question in a unique manner, which has vexed the most ardent anthropologists and ethnologists. They have intermarried, it is quite true, and with many unfortunate consequences, but never with the colored folks, so that theirs has been an experiment that for uniqueness may top even that of the Pitcairn Islanders, or any place where slaves, unfortunately, were introduced.

Predominantly of Dutch descent (I fear many Sabians will resent this statement, since many believe they are of English or Scotch stock) they speak the English language only. They are Lutherans, a most religious people, yet with a Catholic tolerance

they avail themselves, in their spiritual moments, of the ministrations of an Anglican Bishop. This worthy's abode is at Antigua, nearby, and he, by the way, as we were scaling the ravine, was coming down, with his arm in a sling, to board the vessel and to seek medical care. We learned later that he had been thrown by a horse to the edge of a ravine, while on tour to his flock higher up, and had barely escaped with his life.

Sabians are ardent lovers of nature, so that Bottom, the village where we came to first, seemed to be a converted flower garden. The Sabians' love of flowers must be an inheritance from their sturdy, flower-loving forefathers in Holland, on the banks of the Zuider Zee.

In these days of hectic re-armament it is a solace and a pleasure to come to one place in this mad universe of ours where the cost of an army's upkeep is infinitesimally small. Saba's army appropriation is practically nil, since the size of the army is but *one man*. While, it is true, we did discover a jail, I was told that due to the characteristically honest trait of the Sabian people it rarely held a prisoner, although at the time of our visit, there had been a murder, and a woman was incarcerated there. She had killed her lover in a brawl. It had been a case of *chercher* or should I say, *chasser l'homme* instead of *la femme*, in this land of oddity, where there are so many more women than men.

Local politics, unless it was the miserly manner in which Curaçao treats its more unfortunate Dutch islands, that once were also great, seemed to interest or bother them little. But American politics were continually on the tips of their tongues. These luckless people had neither liquor laws nor temperance societies, and if I remember correctly, at the time we were there, there existed one radio, while of that other modern contraption, the telephone, they possessed just a solitary one-way line, connecting the shed of the harbor-master with the office of Heer Kruger, at Bottom, the Administrator, and that of the Constable at Hell's Gate, higher up. There were many who had never seen a motor car; electric light was a thing unknown; motion pictures fared equally badly. Stranger even is the fact that while Saba grows no timber on its volcanic soil, all of its spick-and-span houses, that befit this unique sailor-made town, are made of timber.

Fed upon rumor and undoubted inaccuracy set forth in many so-called reliable travel books, recent as well as old, is a widely circulated legend that relates to boats having been built up in the volcano, later to be lowered by cables down the two thousand feet to the water. To continue this fantastic tale, it said that the steep paths and the heads of the patient inhabitants were used to carry the timber up to the plain. This story is nothing but fiction, as every Saba man will attest. To verify this, I called on an old-timer in Windward Side, a fisherman, and as reliable and trustworthy a sea salt as ever was. "Pure nonsense and bunkum," he told me. As far as he could remember, only one boat had been built on the island and then it had been taken down the ladder on the heads and shoulders of dozens of slaves.

No fiction, however, is the fact that most of the men leave their soil, their homes, their wives and children in this mid-sea pinnacle, to go to sea as pilots, sailors and such, while the fair-haired women, blue-eyed, rosy-cheeked maidens and the rest of them, together with the few yellow, brown and black inhabitants, raise potatoes, strawberries, vegetables and fruits, with the older women quite deftly turning their hands to the ancient art of making embroidery and very nice lace. It is easy to understand why most of the men have taken to the sea; not because their women are a "bodderation," but because it is in their blood and because of sheer necessity.

With the island small and unfertile, local resources would not be sufficient to support the population. In early life the Saba men are taught the use of sextant and chronometer, necessary adjuncts to the business of every true Sabian, that of seamanship. Hence, incongruous as it may sound, practically all Sabians are able-bodied seamen, sailors and pilots, by choice and profession. From early life to their declining years, when at last they come back to roost in their snug harbor, they keep on sailing the brine of the seven seas, as sailors, pilots, officers and even captains of liners, large and small.

One day, at The Ladder landing, as the evening began to set over the crags and rocks and unruly ocean below, it dawned upon me again how hard it is to beat these Sabian Dutch. To be able to support a happy, healthy, thrifty populace in a place without harbor, anchorage, or landing place, on a barren volcanic rock, a

thousand or so feet high, is truly a worthy achievement, and one of which the Sabians may justly be proud.

What intrigued me more than anything else in the place, and that, as an ethnologist and historian, would always capture my attention, was the peculiarity that almost the entire white population consisted of but very few families: to wit, the Zeegers, the Simmondses, the Johnsons, the Hassels, and the Simpsons, etc. John Sympson, ancestor of the last-named, in 1667 Commander of St. Martin, wrested Saba from the English, while of the Zeegers' ancestor we know this: that he must have been one Jan Zeegers who, in the year 1686, became Vice Commander of this isle.

As for the Hassels, I learned by perusing early records in the Archives in The Netherlands, last year, that they must have descended from a Jan van Hasselt, a shoemaker cobbling on one of the Dutch privateers. Perhaps he was responsible in some way for the inception of the shoemaking industry on the island during Saba's earlier history. This may not be far amiss, since the present Hassel stock are a sandy, bluff lot, stocky, and domestic in their outlook—a trait for which the Dutch are well known.

The Johnsons may or may not have descended from Morgan's buccaneering ship crew. In addition to the above there are the Levericks, once called "Leverocks," the Vander Poels, the Anslyns, the Everyys and a small number of others, all apparently from later arrivals.

Still, almost everyone in Bottom, except the government official, Mr. Kruger, a native Hollander who married a Saba girl, is known by the name of Simmonds; while higher up, in Windward Side and Hell's Gate (the other villages), reside the rest of the clans, including the Johnsons and the Hassels.

Now do not be misled into believing that a Johnson or a Hassel will easily betroth himself or herself to a Simmonds, or vice versa. Things do not move that way in Saba. There must be sufficient reason for either to take what they consider such a rash step, for the plausible fact is that they are clannish to the extreme. But once such a union is decided upon, the Hassel, the Simmonds or the Johnson swain builds his tiny house, with the treasures that he may have gathered while roaming the seas.

Isolated as these Sabians have been for so many years, it is easy

to see now why, with so much inbreeding and intermarrying, as has happened with the Pitcairn Islanders, it would make them worthy of study. The fact that no colored stock has been allowed to filter in has been the means by which they have kept the race pure, and with the limited number with which the colony began has resulted, in some instances, in disastrous race degeneracy.

At one time not so very long ago there were instances of closer-than-cousin matings and incestual relationships, with grievous effects. It is a biological fact, with the exception of very rare instances, that inbreeding and cousin-marriages may never lead to evil results, provided there existed no defect in the original stock. With the genetic line sound, therefore, unpleasant consequences from these first-cousin marriages may not result. When it comes to even-closer-than-cousin relationships, although science has shown that sister and brother marriages have often been successful, producing few defectives to speak of (we have only to refer to the Egyptian Dynasty with its brother-and-sister matings or those of the Incas in Peru), it appears that on Saba, at least in St. Mary's Point, one of the more isolated villages 'way at the top, conditions of very close sexual relations have existed. In the course of time they did not fail to leave mental defectives in their wake with conditions so injurious as to call for governmental action.

Six months after our visit to the island, the villagers of St. Mary's Point were moved, in one body, to Hell's Gate and Windward Side, upon Governor van Slobbe's order. Isolation there had done its worst to the villagers, and so many mental or moral defectives with attendant incestual relationships existed, that their prevalence on the island, even far removed from the others, had become a threat to purer and saner strains.

It is true the people in Saba very frequently would deny the existence of such cases, but once the government interfered they were willing to concede its cogency.

Isolation, in such out-of-the-way places, has been an essential factor in these incestual happenings. Other minor factors here may have been the Sabian's inherent abhorrence of racial miscegenation, which in itself was also a definite bar to the crossing of whites and blacks.

Those who follow, with me, the development of the Sabians

cannot fail to gain the impression that the social relations of the Saba Islanders, in all the villages, must have been those of one large family. This is true; but they are in groups so small, with practically the same ancestors, similar occupations and community interests, that social distinctions and division are, in the main, totally absent.

The simple life that must have prevailed there in the very beginning has been repeated, or continued, in succeeding generations. Since inbreeding is very prevalent, as I already have brought out, it is quite natural that all, of the white population only, are therefore interrelated.

With his pious and traditional religious upbringing, the Sabian is scared breathless when someone treads the primrose path; hence having an illegitimate child is considered one of the worst sins, while adultery is not condoned. Here we have again one of the strange paradoxes of which Saba is so replete: On the one hand, in some places incest may be rife, while on the other, the sexual morality of these islanders is almost "too good to be true."

Absence of most of the Sabian men brings women greatly into the majority. It is easy to comprehend, therefore, why a great matriarchate has sprung up, similar, to a great extent, to our own American matriarchate. In America, with men in the course of time having become too preoccupied with their business, women have slowly but surely taken the upper hand in many important issues.

Sabian women keep their villages tidy and clean and in the intervals between cooking and scrubbing, dusting and washing (again, characteristics inherently Dutch), they find occasion and time to turn out beautiful handwork and lace, some of which in good times fetch fancy prices, that add to their small wealth.

In this colony of women, where men are at a premium, with leadership perched on the women's shoulders, there is no gain-saying that the veneration of women, and especially the mothers, is very great. Not a few of the internecine quarrels that mar the otherwise so docile and benign existence is caused by an insult to the name of a mother. This mother-veneration has actually gone so far that the Methodists have inaugurated a Mothers' Day, as wise people with an eye for business have started here. Every

Sabian on that day sports a white flower in honor of his or her mother.

When a Sabian dies, the whole island becomes one large family, and everyone, unsolicited, proffers his or her aid to the bereaved. Large is the procession that follows the dead to the grave (which in many cases is right in the deceased's own garden). The more the person was beloved in life, the larger the cortege that follows the coffin. This is a left-over, undoubtedly, from the times when the people believed that the soul of the dead must be accompanied, in this vale of tears, on his or her last trip; and the larger the number of mourners, the better reception accorded the deceased in the hereafter. Which explains to the Sabians' satisfaction that the larger the company among the living, the better will be his welfare in the hereafter. Hence, upon witnessing a tremendous Sabian funeral, it is quite a common thing to hear them exclaim, "He certainly kept large company," while for those whose funeral cortege is small, such expressions as, "Poor soul, he had only a few followers," are commonly heard.

As emphasized in the beginning of these chapters, the Episcopal Church of England is the predominant faith, replacing the Dutch Reformed Church, so that in this Holland-governed isle, the sermon is preached by English ministers, who are answerable to an English Synod or an English Episcopal Bishop.

Strangely enough, the Sabians' favorite place of worship was at one time a little Catholic Chapel, built in the loneliest and seemingly most Godforsaken section on this barren rock, a nook naively called Hell's Gate, often referred to as Zion's Hill, located about sixteen hundred feet above sea level and nestled strangely enough against a mountainous clevity.

Hell's Gate is reached also by a ladder-like flight of steps of stone, from Bottom, taking one past almost perpendicular ravines of breath-taking ruggedness and indescribable beauty. We did that stretch on horses provided us, when we reached Bottom, through the courtesy of Mr. Kruger. We stopped about half way, at Windward Side, a meticulous village, with its churches, toy houses, walled-in like the Puras in ancient Bali, a graveyard reeking with antiquity, a general store owned by a Hassel, with its usual number of loitering gossips speculating on what motivated our visit,

an office of the Agent of the Royal Netherlands Line, which made us wonder why it was there, of all places, and *summa summarum*, the *Sanctum Sanctorum* of the Authority representing the Dutch Crown.

For about a mile the path coils its way upwards, presenting, from an almost dazzling height, an unbroken view of surrounding territory. On one side, we would behold the summit and on the other, the deep blue sea, sobbing and moaning, and often roaring and splashing its foam into the crevices and caves 'way below. Finally, we reached Hell's Gate, where it was as windy as are some of our grandiloquent politicians.

It was at Hell's Gate, situated in the wildest and most forlorn part of the island, that a story was told of a certain Father Jennesens, a deposed cleric who for many years had ruled in these parts over these simple hearts with a power surpassing even that of Kings. The Dominicans, his order, some years ago bade him come back to Curaçao, to reward him with what was thought to be the right kind of promotion for his unrelenting zeal and effort. The old man, having grown up amidst, and endeared himself to, his flock, could not bear to leave these sailors and their wives and children. So Father Jennesens resolved to quit the order and return to Saba and his flock. His children, as he always called them, as a reward for his unselfish devotion, and in order to show him their appreciation, built him a church, a very small one all for himself. It was to this little church that all his children from 'way below and around here flocked to hear him, including the sailor men when home from the sea. No Saint, so they said, could have a more beautiful niche built than this one in the remotest and wildest part of the rock. Here it was, a little white church with a pink roof on a big rock cleft in two, and beside the church the toy-like house in which he lived until he died. It was an ideal spot for a shrine in lasting memory to a faithful worker of his Church.

From this spot, the panorama, embracing the girdle of numberless islands—St. Martin, St. Barths, Nevis, Tortola, etc.—all against an azurean background, was indeed superb.

Saba is a bane for the stout and the lazy, which is easy to understand, since there are only three horses and most of the travel has to be done on foot over steep, rocky hills. This reminds me of a story

that may be an incentive to a certain author of adventure tales to try, here, his Hannibalistic prowess!

Some years ago a doctor solicited the Government in Curaçao for a post at either St. Martin or Saba. Doctors then, as now, were sorely needed in these places. At first he asked for a post in St. Martin, which, however, was not open, but he learned that Saba was free. Being burdened with an excessive amount of superfluous avoirdupois, for whose reduction mountain-climbing might have been *the* thing, this stout Dutchman hesitated to accept the Saba post unless, as he stated, the Government would place an elephant at his disposal.

One of the outstanding characteristics of the Saba people, in common with many tardy wives and others of similar nature, is that they always arrive too late. It may be granted, however, that there is really nothing in Saba that makes for undue haste. In days of yore, in Saba, school was scheduled to start at nine and the children, for the same unaccountable reason that seems to be the affliction of children all over the world, were in the habit of arriving at ten. "Good," said the teacher, "you *will* come an hour late, therefore we shall begin an hour later"—and then the children began to arrive at eleven. Rather than chance not seeing them at school at all, the school marms of today begin classes at eight, so that the little dears are sure to arrive at nine.

Schooling, here, is given in the public schools as well as in the parochial schools of the Catholic faith, the languages being English and Dutch; although, "believe it or not," Dutch in this *Dutch* colony is taught as a *foreign* language only! Do not be misled, however, into believing that the Sabian people are less loyal to their Queen than are the citizens in the Lowlands. Sabians hold a great affection for Wilhelmina, their Queen, and her daughter, Juliana.

The authority of the Crown is vested in the Gezaghebber, or Administrator, who at the time of our visit was Mr. Kruger, and who lived in the biggest toy house in Bottom, surrounded by a garden overlooking his domain. Near his house are two churches and the offices of the Government, not to forget that of the tax collector, to whom the Sabians have such difficulty in paying their tribute.

On the outskirts, actually jammed against the rocks, resides the

colored population, with little, if any, of the miscegenation that has plagued other lands. These colored folk are thrifty and often in better circumstances than their white neighbors, so that, as I have been told, there are many cases where the colored man becomes the white man's banker. How true this is, I have not been able to corroborate.

In this island, where family names are few and far between, everyone is called by his or her Christian name. So that they will speak of a Miss Mary, Mr. William, etc., with even the married women—both young and old—being called a Miss. I was told an amusing tale of a certain Miss Kate, a schoolteacher, who was married and had ten children. She was still teaching school when she attained the ripe old age of ninety summers; and in the classroom this venerable school marm was addressed by the youngsters as "Miss Juffrouw Kate," thus, "Miss Miss Kate" ("juffrouw" being the Dutch word for "Miss").

While the life of the Saba Islanders is dull, their social activities being limited indeed, they find relief in their gardens and in small gossip and chatter, and in marriage as well as in news from their American relatives, of which they have many. Once a stranger, or a visitor arrives, he adds a welcome stimulus—revenue and chatter—and he is received, like a long-lost brother, with open arms. A house (with board or otherwise) is easy to find, at a cost that never exceeds fifty guilders, or about thirty dollars a month, for the family.

The climate of Saba is fine; free of mosquitoes and insects, its cool and enervating fresh sea breezes make it an ideal place for convalescents, if only the Government would provide better facilities for getting there. In such an event, reminiscent of the saying, "Go West, young man," I should more conscientiously be able to say to my fellow Americans and other travelers, "Go Saba."

There are no wells, and yet there is plenty of drinking water whose source, the clouds, keeps on filling the cisterns regularly. Saba possesses the only deposit of pure sulphur in this part of the world. The mines are rich, the sulphur is good, but due to their almost inaccessible location, near Hell's Gate, transportation is too difficult to make its export profitable.

Such is Saba, the mysterious, looking down from its pinnacle

like a buzzard from its eyrie. It is almost incredible—at once sublime and ridiculous, and a place, I am safe in saying, almost unknown and one of the most paradoxical spots I have ever visited.

Reluctantly we left this hospitable spot, where our stay had been all too short. Down The Ladder we scrambled in a late afternoon, when, like a ball of molten gold, the sun slowly began to take its dip into the sea. Twilight, as always in the tropics, would pass quickly, so we hurried back to board our vessel, St. Eustatius-bound.

A lazy breeze rushed us out into the ocean, as mysterious Saba stood up bold and dark green in the fading light, her outline still distinct but her summit shrouded again in a cap of clouds.

Little by little the shadows in the rocks at Saba's feet became lost in a sort of jumbled blend, and when we were about to turn, the gray-bluish mass between sea and sky remained, to us, but a *fantasmagoria*.

St. Eustatius

THE GOLDEN ROCK



FORT ORANGE
ST. EUSTATIUS
N. W. INDIES.

H. de Vries 1938



IT IS THE 16TH OF NOVEMBER OF the year 1776. Fort Orange, of St. Eustatius, a very important island in the Windward Islands group, is moved to great excitement.

Portly Dutch burghers, and their no-less-portly and buxom wives, scurry to and fro in a state of bustling bewilderment, wondering what is causing the guns of the Fort to roar out a thunderous salute.

Below, in the open roadstead, the little brig "Andrea Doria" of fourteen guns, and third of our feeble American infant navy of five vessels, drops anchor almost under the frowning walls and very guns of the Fort.

The popular Howard Tavern, filled with many foreigners at the time, is the scene of a great scurrying to and fro as the startled guests leave their tankards of beer and glasses of gin and rum, and toddle, as fast as their heavy legs will carry them, to the edge of the town walls to catch a glimpse of the strange flag that many of the "old salts" surmise to be that of the new and young American Republic to the north.

Ordinarily, a brig such as the "Andrea Doria" would scarcely

attract any attention, accustomed as are the burghers of this "contraband-port" to seeing new and foreign be-flagged vessels in the large roadstead. But the presence of this brig presents a different story—because she flies the flag of a republic where events of more than ordinary importance have been taking place recently.

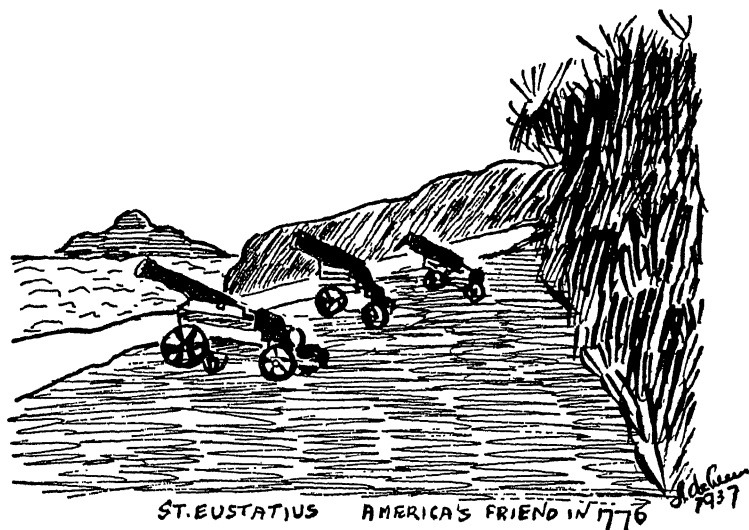
These are strange doings, in this year 1776, with a new nation on the American mainland in the making, where the scream of the American Eagle is just beginning to be heard in the land.

In those days, long before, and during and after the American Revolution, the two miles of roadstead from Gallows Bay to Interlopers Point were bestudded with a motley of ships, and as many as two hundred at a time would ride at anchor before sun-bathed "Statia," as the place then was called. A steady stream of bum-boats and others would ply between them and the shore, laden to the gunwales with stocks gathered honestly or otherwise, and booty which was brought to Statia from all ports of the world. The streets of dusty Oranjestad (Orangeville) were crowded with merchants, slaves, stevedores, traders, soldiers and sailors, corsairs and privateers, while bales and crates, barrels and boxes filled the warehouses that flanked the large beach and lined the thoroughfares to overflowing. Unable to find space in the warehouses for their wares and loot, merchants and skippers themselves often would set up marts in the open air, using sail canvas, and packing boxes for their impromptu auction rooms.

Ships flying the flags of all nations steered their course for Statia, so that the roadstead of Oranjestad was a veritable forest of masts and yards. Immense warehouses lined the waterfront. There existed a maritime and a commercial exchange to take care of the traffic, such as the world never before had known. Here, the merchants of France, Spain, America and many other nations found convenient *entrepot* for their merchandise in warehouses, the crumbling walls of which still lie along its shore. Statia's Mart, truly a godsend for free traders, enjoyed the prosperity of a Tyre and Sidon; and to it also flocked the privateers from Portland, Salem, Nieuw Amsterdam, Baltimore, Boston and other ports, to refit, refuel, repair, dispose of captured prizes and loot, and to set out again re-loaded with wares for American ports. Ameri-

can shipping, especially that of Salem and of other New England ports, had grown so rapidly in these pre-Revolutionary days, that it even caused British statesmen to declare in 1775 that "the commerce of our American Colonies was entirely out of proportion beyond the numbers of our people."

When the regulations and duties of the Grenville and Townsend Acts imposed heavy burdens upon their trade, Salem and other



New England merchants were the first ones to set up a hue and cry (and not without good cause) against the policy of the British. Salem's merchantmen and privateers had developed to a greater extent the smuggling trade with Statia and other centers in the West Indies than those of any other American merchant town. Outstanding, among these New England merchants trading with Statia and other free-port contraband nests, was the Derby family of Salem—proving, perhaps, that this town of Endicott and Roger Conant should be known not only for its cases of strange witchcraft, and as the birthplace of Nathaniel Hawthorne, but also for its many illustrious merchant enterprises that helped to give this colony its early supremacy. Many a Salem lad took to privateers in those days when Captain Paul Jones roamed the seas; and it was Elias Hasket Derby, the son of Captain Richard Derby, who may

be said to have been the first American to challenge the old country's trading monopolies in the East. It was he who commanded many vessels to the West Indies. At one time, during the Revolution, he owned many Salem privateers, which large and swift craft he used for the West Indian traffic and for subsequent trade with Statia.

. Another illustrious American name, that in one way or another was linked with the smuggling days of Statia, was that of the Biddle Family of Philadelphia. We learn that Nicholas Biddle, ninth child and fifth surviving son of William and Mary (Scull) Biddle, and born in Philadelphia (1750), at the age of thirteen embarked upon a life on the sea until, following this career, he met his death in the service of the young colony, on board of the "Randolph" on March 7, 1778. Biddle went to England, became a midshipman on a British sloop-of-war, and while being transferred to another vessel, to become a volunteer, had become affiliated with the famous British admiral and idol, Horatio Nelson, both having been made coxswains in 1773. When England and American colonists were at sixes and sevens, this young and gallant chap returned to his native land—which was to be expected of even any run-of-the-mill American colonist—and was placed in command of a galley, the "Franklin," which, however, he found devoid of the danger and adventure he was seeking. By a resolution of Congress, he was appointed captain of the "Andrea Doria," the brig of which I spoke earlier in these pages. It is not certain now whether Biddle was on it in November 1776, when the brig called at Statia. We are sure, however, that the glittering glamor of American privateering did not fail to cast its glow upon this young American, too; so that it is not at all unlikely that at some time or other in his career he may have graced even the contraband nest, Statia, with his adventuresome presence.

Statia in those days had become the richest commercial center in the world. In evaluating this statement, it is well to bear in mind that in the year 1776, as the records—thanks to that port's constable—show, 1,810 ships were cleared through Statia's port, while the staggering number of 3,551 ships made Statia, or St. Eustatius, their port of call in 1779. It makes one wonder how

this erstwhile darling of the mercantile gods could so have fallen into decay.

Thanks also to the records that appeared in the *West Indian Guide*, a Dutch Colonial magazine from the pen of W. R. Menkman, published in The Hague, I was fortunate enough to be able to gain an interesting glimpse of the types of ships in this port's arrivals. I learned, for instance, that they consisted of ordinary brigs, or brigantines, schooners and other three-masted ships, probably similar in type to the "Mayflower" (a three-masted, double-deck vessel) as well as one-masted barks, or sloops, as they were called by the British, which latter formed the largest part of the contingent.

As to the flags under which these vessels would enter the port, they belonged to many nations, although it was not too frequently that their masters would feel any compunction at sailing into port under false colors. Thanks once more to the records of the constable, we learn of such names as the "Dolphin," of an American ship called the "Four Sisters," of a *Frenchman* known by the romantic name of "La Fleur d'Amour"; while of purely Anglo-Saxon named ships, which were also common visitors, there were the "Hawk," "Trial," "Greyhound," "Rainger," and "Speedwell." There were even more significantly American names among them, such as "Ready Money," "Integrity," "Good Intent," "Fair Trader," "Loyal Subject," while before 1771 there was even a ship boasting the diverting name of "Frie Americaan" or the "Free American."

The conglomerate cargoes of these privateering vessels also present an illuminating picture, because sugar, coffee, cocoa, cotton, indigo (which disappeared from cargo lists when synthetic dyes made their bow), syrup and campeche or "campeachy" wood, appeared on the manifests of vessels bound for our North American ports. It should be interpolated here that many of these commodities were imported on our own or other privateers to the States, about which practice I shall tell more fully somewhat further in this chronicle. Also, as I believe it may interest some readers with a penchant for the doings in those glorious Revolutionary days to know what our own American colonists were sending to Statia in those hectic times, let me recite just briefly:

Among the cargoes were rice, originating in Carolina; bread, flour and beans figured in very large quantities, while pickled fish came both from our own States and from Canada. There were barrels and staves and timber for building (more recently, it has come to my notice that complete houses, dismantled for shipping but all ready to be set up, were also exported to Statia from our own States), as well as turpentine, tar, and lard candles, dry goods, iron and iron manufactures—although gun powder and arms were never manifested, and for very obvious reasons.

Statia was not only a free port but a neutral island as well, to which practically all commerce of any importance, honest or illicit, became diverted. This was brought about primarily by England's short-sighted policy of trading in the colonies, which ruined her commerce in the West Indies. Practically all traffic between Europe and American Colonies was conducted through Statia. Another factor instrumental in bringing the trade with Statia to such great proportions was the heavy restrictions placed upon the industries of our own American Colonies, which included, of course, the shipping of the above-named commodities.

Under the Provisions of the British Navigation Acts, colonial vessels shared equally with British ships in the West Indian commerce. Once the United States had become independent, however, the new American Republic's vessels, like those of other nations, were excluded, although France opened her West Indian Islands to American ships in 1778.

In this era of British monopoly of American trade, manufactured articles came actually from England, while French goods, instead of being sold direct, had to touch at England first. This parallels somewhat a situation existent in the Sumatra tobacco trade of today, with American buyers being compelled to attend the auctions at Amsterdam (Holland), and purchase their choice leaf there, at Amsterdam prices.

In other words, the colonials and colonists were the under-dogs, with England not only ruling the waves, but also the prices of commodities as well. Because, so reasoned the slow, but wily, trading Briton, he had a perfect right, while policing the seas with his navy and protecting the colonies, to exact taxes and enforce duties wherever the British flag was flown. Hence, he would

not sit idly by and tolerate such transgressions as tax evasion, contrabanding, etc., although to keep the record straight, let me state that even many British, wherever they traded and had the chance, broke the same laws with efficient glee.

At the time when Great Britain was mistress of the seas and swooped down on all foreign navies, America's navy was infinitesimally small and weak. In the year 1782, America had but eight warships that flew the new American flag. But unimportant as was America's navy, so great and important was her fleet of tradesmen's privateers that at the time when the Statia incident took place, close to a hundred and fifty ships flew our early American flag.

It is common knowledge that during the Spanish War of Succession, Danish St. Thomas, and Dutch Curaçao—then rather obscure and not as important as they are today—imported victuals from the North American colonies with which they outfitted French privateers and buccaneers. When in 1730, Great Britain commenced her agitation to monopolize the sugar trade, which resulted in the promulgation of the famed Molasses Act, this act became almost untenable, since the Danish and the Dutch traders continued to import French West Indian sugar and North American goods. But again it was an ill wind that yet blew nice things St. Eustatius' way, because Statia profited handsomely by this smuggling traffic. Before the year 1741, there had arrived at the island of Statia many ships eager to exchange North American goods for French rum and "melasse"—as it was then called—most of which was destined for Rhode Island, and it was common knowledge to the British that there arrived on the average of three hundred vessels in 1750, to function as intermediaries or middlemen in the unlawful traffic between British North America and French West India. It was also an open secret that there existed a number of British merchants (often called traitors to their own country) at St. Kitts, and also at Statia, who maintained barrel industries and distilleries there and zealously engaged in the illicit French rum and molasses traffic.

The Portuguese had been the most pernicious contrabandists in the West Indies in the Sixteenth Century. Their adventures, as they voyaged in constant caravels from Lisbon to Cape Verde,

thence across to these islands, laden with Negro slaves and provisions, make glamorous reading. But the Dutch certainly carried the palm for profitable contrabanding and illicit traffic toward the end of the Sixteenth and during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, which caused an English historian, in Boston, to describe the Dutch West India merchants as "likewise eminently respectable smugglers on an enormous scale." What the historian failed to add, however, was that many in the American colonies at that time had not the slightest compunction about breaking the same laws, often beginning with forged sailing papers and then by the use of foreign flags to get them by the British eagle eye.

And now, in order to better understand how all this came about, let us turn back the pages of history for a while and scan them briefly.

It was a British voyager, a man called Hawkins, who must receive the doubtful honor of realizing that there would come a steady demand among the early colonists for manufactured goods and Negro slaves. It was he who first began to disregard Portuguese prohibitions against trading along the African Coast—something, however, that was not entirely a new idea, since the British merchants had been flouting Portuguese claims for many years.

The Dutch, as I brought out in the chapter on Saba, had been the cargo-carriers of American goods from Sevilla—goods which had been carried there by foreign ships. When the rebellious subjects in the Lowlands were forcibly upbraided by the Spanish King "that they had better let go of this traffic lest they be spanked," Dutch and Flemish merchantmen, undaunted, sailed across to the West Indian ports to do that little job themselves, there to exchange their wares for those of American make.

In those days, the essential for Holland's herring and cheese industries was salt, which at that time was obtained from Portuguese salt pans. When the enforcement of the above prohibition brought an end to this, the Dutch were not satisfied to see their herring industry go to ruin, an event which would do incalculable harm both to the completeness of the Dutch breakfast table and to their foreign trade in this commodity, which was wherever else herring was eaten. This salty affair started a veritable tempest in a salt-shaker. Thus, while stolid men in Flushing, Veere and Goes sat

around teak tables drinking their gin and talking of salt and fish, their ships began to frequent, in ever-increasing numbers, the West Indian coasts where salt pans were worked with Negro slaves. This actually may have started the Dutch in their illicit slave traffic. Being rather good traders, they began to undersell their competitors with European manufactures and slaves from the Guineas, a trade that, though entirely unorganized, raised the Dutch Lord-of-the-Herring to a position of almost unchallengeable supremacy in Holland, and also became the traffic in human bondage—about which no pious Hollander of that day had any compunction.

Then the gigantic West India Company, brain child of Willem Usselinx, made its bow before the world. Fostered not alone for the practical idea of making money for its stolid directors, among whom were listed the best of Holland's merchant names, it was organized primarily to further Dutch trade and to enable them to plant their tricolor in the newly founded colonies, at the expense of Spain. The slave trade again provided an important field for their activities; but realizing that warfare in the Caribbean against Spain, Britain, France and whatever other nations with whom they would have to contend, would not pay, they turned their efforts to trades from which they could expect steady returns. Like good merchandisers, they established, under van Walbeec, depots in Curaçao, St. Martin and Statia. These depots gave every access to the Spanish Main besides solving the question whence to procure the much-needed salt, a fundamental essential on which Holland's greatness at that time was built. The West India Company, this huge merchants' enterprise, not only ruled these colonies and had a fleet to protect them, but in the last decades of the Seventeenth Century became the largest dealer in all the world in ebony slaves, or "zwart eboniet," as the trade then was called. Not unlike Rhode Island which, in these contemporary days, figured as the largest trading center for slaves in America.

Which brings me to another epoch: the day of wandering and drifting from island to island in search of wealth and change—a common trait of all these earlier colonist-peddlers. These were days of obscure struggle for supremacy and occupation among Dutch and French and British alike, and as in all such perplexed times,

with nations constantly at each other's throats, and showing rapid changes, the period was speckled with blood. The Dutch boom, now receiving its death-knell, could not last much longer. Portugal's Independence spelled the downfall of the Dutch West India Company, so that about the year 1650 almost every vestige of Dutch power had been driven out of Brazil, while in Africa also their position had become untenable against Portugal. It was then that the West India Company met its true defeat.

There ensued that period of the adventurers in which cartels and flags of truce, together with filibuster, buccaneer and privateer made much of their rights at sea, with the merchants in Europe financing and taking an interest in these explosive, adventurous and highly speculative enterprises.

Privateering was the de luxe business of that romantic epoch of adventure, and many were occupied in it. In our own American colonies, sixty ships engaged in it at first, in a small way, but the traffic gradually grew to such proportions, with captures of rich prizes, that that may indirectly have forced Britain's hand.

As could be expected in such enterprise, the mercenary element reigned supreme, and yet to substantiate the claims that many of these adventurers did not always belong to the scum of the earth, there were the Zeeland Filibusters, Gerard Bogaert and Jan Erasmus Heining, in the earliest days, operating with commissions out of Curaçao, while a certain Jurriaan Aernouts was in the service of some North American merchant. As years progressed, we learn of Jacques Cassard and his ship "Le Neptune," that particular corsair and privateer of Nantes, who was even decorated by his King, and of well-known admirals in the British navy who felt no moral pangs at amassing their initial fortunes in this privateering business. There were Henry Morgan and Sieur de Grammont, Nicolaes van Hoorn and Laurens de Graaf, a Mansfeld, who buccaneered from Jamaica, though belonging in Curaçao; there was one called Rock, the Brazilian, and an Esquemeling, called "The Barber." But the most glamorous of all was the gentle Dampier, author and buccaneer, who left a very colorful record for our delectation, written with goose-quill in a most lucid and simple prose, concerning the adventurous and intriguingly dangerous profession.

I often wonder, while analyzing and dissecting this heroic and

adventurous epoch of cacophony and color, as it spreads out before me like a huge jigsaw puzzle, whether our American bootleggers of the Prohibition Period may not have gone for their cue to the corsair and privateer, because their *modus operandi* has been almost the same.

And now, having attempted to portray, in brief survey, events that have been blended into this early West Indian pattern, let us revert again to Statia and the "Andrea Doria" and see how they fit into the picture.

Johannes de Graaff, Statia's Governor, as keen a Dutch trader as ever was sent across the seas, paces the rooms of his country seat, "Concordia," absorbed in thought, racking his brain as to what course to pursue, as the "Andrea Doria" seeks a place in the roadstead.

Abraham Ravena, the Fort's Commandant, is also in a quandary, and not without reason, because as he lowers the red-white-and-blue flag of the United Netherlands Republic, in recognition of the important visitor, the brig's Master fires a salute. That requires a little more recognition than a mere lowering-of-the-flag in reply, he reasons, and thereupon leaves the dusty office in front of the Fort to look for the Governor, because here is a knotty problem which needs a higher authority than himself to unravel. Besides, what adds to his dilemma is that, close to the "Andrea Doria" a British ship lies anchored; and everyone knows of the enmity of the Briton for the Dutch. So, hankering to pass the buck, Ravena waddles and toddles hurriedly along to "Concordia," to let Governor de Graaff have the sole honor of solving the grave matter. The Governor, in the meantime, has seen the brig long before Commander Ravena meets him in the street of the upper town and before the fat-cheeked, pot-bellied Ravena, completely out of breath, can begin to jabber his story or can pose the question, the courageous, matter-of-fact Governor de Graaff, his mind already made up, phlegmatically gives the laconic order, "Two guns less than the national salute!"

Fort Oranje, upon Governor de Graaff's historic order, boomed out a thunderous salute of eleven guns to the Banner of the new

sister-republic, and for the first time the New America was recognized by a Netherlands West Indies Colony. And so it came to pass, on this memorable afternoon of the 16th of November, that for the first time in its infant history the earliest prototype of our present Stars-and-Stripes was graciously saluted by a sympathetic foreign power. Something that, I hazard a guess, very few of my readers may have known.

A pretty mess Governor de Graaff got himself into, as the succeeding pages will show. It brought the British to Statia, under Admiral Rodney; it spelled ruin for this port, causing the capture of ships and valuable cargoes, as well as unnecessary burning of records—something the Dutch have never quite forgotten.

While the obstinate Dutch tendered no apology to England, de Graaff's act nevertheless caused the burgher-fathers in Amsterdam's Stadhuis to be ill-at-ease. So that, while stopping on their way home in the Pylsteeg, at quaint Wynand Fockink's (the Gin House), for their daily sip of orange-bitters-with-a-cookie, they evolved a plan to reprimand the "*stoute jongen*," or "naughty boy," de Graaff, although in their hearts these oldsters were proud of the courage and spirit this youngster displayed. Therefore, for apparently diplomatic reasons, Commandeur de Graaff was recalled; but later, when the smoke had cleared, he was reinstated as Governor of Statia.

What irked the British most, in the years that followed, was the continued use of Statia as a contraband nest. Had its people confined themselves to legitimate traffic, it probably would not have led to war and subsequent destruction of the port. But as is always the case when business booms and money is made fast, the people went completely money-mad. Losing their heads and with them their erstwhile caution, they no longer hesitated to take the long chances, such as granting Dutch letters of patent and charters to American merchantmen; thereby rousing the jealousy of the already piqued Briton to even greater fury. Perhaps Britain's grievances were not entirely without foundation, although as has been said, they in turn were not averse to doing a bit of privateering on their own, even availing themselves of help from America, whenever the occasion presented itself.

While on this subject, I have a hazy recollection of a contempo-

rary of John Jacob Astor, also as greedy a man, and as devoid of mercy and of conscience. I believe it was Stephen Girard, that miserly but fabulously wealthy Philadelphia citizen who, so the story goes, had no qualms about trading illicitly with the British. It was he, if my memory plays me no prank, who founded his immense fortune on gains from the use of forged papers so his vessels could bring supplies to British warships.

But to revert to the British, they were frothing at the mouth, looking for a chance to teach these Dutch a lesson. One wonders why they had not done so earlier and had waited so long to take matters in hand. The blockade of the American coastline, for instance, would have been an easy matter because they had a hundred or so British warships bobbing at anchor in a *dolce far niente* fashion off the American shore. But so matters stood, until at last the slow-moving British decided that something should be done, and accordingly, on February 3, 1781, Rodney unexpectedly swooped down on Statia. But let us see what led up to that event.

Georges Brydges Rodney, who, in the year 1742, at the age of twenty-four, was given command of the "Plymouth," as its Acting Post Captain, was destined to take a leading hand in England's war against Holland in 1780. It had been arranged that the fleet, under Admiral Arbuthnot, which was engaged in the none-too-successful pastime of operating against the rebellious American colonies, was to join the West Indian squadron, to return later to American waters, when the hurricane season made West Indian waters unsafe.

Strangely enough, this event was to give him a most prominent place in history. The story goes that the despatches to Arbuthnot, owing to a mishap to the vessel carrying them, reached him too late, and so it was left to Rodney to carry out the orders of his King, alone, as he best saw fit. There might have been an interesting epilogue to this, because if the despatches had been received, West India's history might have had to be rewritten.

Rodney proceeded with his fleet, or as many ships as he could gather, and headed for New York, where he arrived off Sandy Hook on the 14th of September of the year 1780.

At that time the contending armed forces received support from the neutrals (armed neutrality, as it then was called), from such

nations as Russia, Denmark and Sweden, not to forget Holland. Holland, always an "*enfant terrible*," was considered later the greatest culprit in this, the greatest offense. As I recall now the words of Lord North—the same Lord North who, on the day of the Boston Massacre, saw fit to put through the British Parliament the repeal of all duties except those of molasses and tea: "Holland suffered Paul Jones, a pirate and a Scotchman, to bring British ships into Holland ports and there to refit them." But that was not all that helped to tip the scales in disfavor of the Dutch. It was actually the capture of the American packet, "The Mercury," that was the fuse that set fire to the already strained relations between Holland and the British. "The Mercury," one should know, had on board an agent of the American Congress, with a draft of a Treaty of Amity to the Netherlands Republic. But tut, tut, this was too much for John Bull to bear! It was the straw that broke the camel's back. War was declared between the two countries.

It was a despatch to Rodney, notifying him of this unfortunate state of affairs, that caused him not only to attack all of the islands of the Dutch West Indies, but to swoop down upon Statia, the key of the pirate, privateer and corsair traffic. Rodney came there from Santa Lucia with enforcements of a squadron of eight ships of the line under Rear Admiral Sir Samuel Hood. The orders were to surround the Bay of St. Eustatius, so as to prevent the escape of even the tiniest vessel. On the third of February, Admiral Rodney arrived in the Bay and summoned the authorities to surrender, with which demand the Dutch Governor immediately complied.

The value of this capture was really tremendous; it was a prize to turn any pirate or corsair green with envy. Upwards of one hundred and fifty ships were taken, including a convoy of richly laden Dutch merchant ships, valued at more than two and a half million dollars. The entire loot was estimated to be over twenty million dollars, and as it was practically impossible for the fleet to carry away such a grand prize, Rodney resorted to a novel experiment: He auctioned off, or rather, had the captains and merchants auction off their own or others' honest or ill-gotten goods on the

very quays where heretofore had existed such tremendous traffic in contraband goods.

There ensued a mammoth auction of goods gathered in, and brought from, all corners of the world. Having seen to it that the goods were shipped away, Admiral Rodney hoisted anchor, making sure that the huge sum netted was safely stored away. Even this would not have been so bad, since "all is fair in war," as the warriors say; but what the Dutch to this very day have never really forgiven is that Rodney caused all the records, that were of immense historic value, to be destroyed, and for which destruction there seemed to have been no earthly reason.

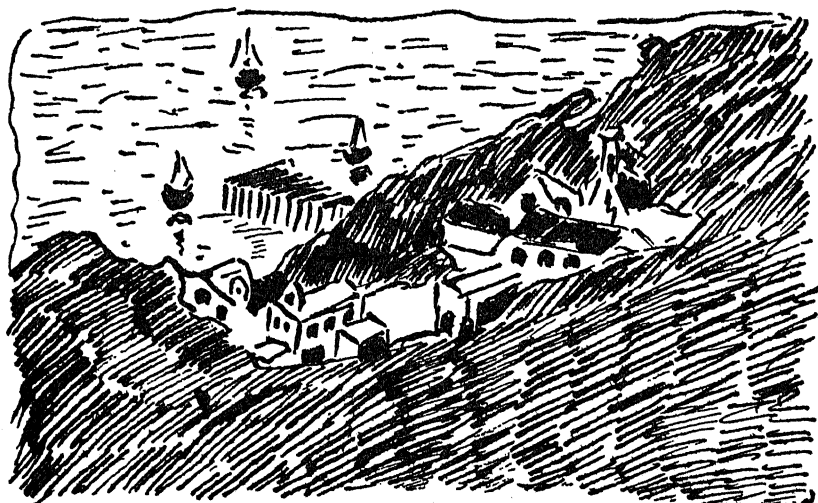
As we know now, from history records, Rodney was a little too overzealous in his trouncings, particularly of those British merchants in Statia or St. Kitts, whom he regarded merely as "traitors to their King and patricides to their country." He pursued that course to justify his seizure of goods and ships, irrespective of ownership, considering them all forfeited to the King of England. The English traders at St. Kitts, claiming their goods to be exempt, were bluntly informed that all goods found in this contraband nest, or in Dutch waters were Dutch contraband and should be treated as such.

This started a terrific rumpus, and charges were brought by St. Kitts merchants, in the House of Commons, through their Deputy, John Glanville, followed by a suit, alleging improper seizure of British-owned goods, particularly of those goods belonging to English residents in Statia. His defense notwithstanding, Rodney was compelled to refund the greater portion of their loss. As for the charge made by the Dutch that he ruthlessly caused the destruction of valuable records, he could find no valid answer for its justification; and this has been the bone of contention for many years.

Statia's fall was complete. It received a *coup de grâce* from which it never recovered. . . . This became at once evident, as we disembarked from our vessel for a visit to the Golden Rock, which Rodney, fluttered over its capture, left totally undefended. Statia was first retaken by the French, then recovered from them by the Dutch, who have retained Statia, or St. Eustatius, to this very day.

For years, I had been hankering to see this decayed remnant of old Dutch glory in its West India domain; so that it was not entirely without emotion that I looked forward to the moment when we would drop anchor in the roadstead and a bumboat would take us ashore.

Statia, as seen from the deck of our freighter, presented a beautiful vista, with the two-thousand-foot-high, extinct volcano rising



ST EUSTATIUS

J. de Rooy 1837

majestically from the sea. A portion of its most southerly slopes has found a grave in the sea, which has caused its ash and lime veins to become visible, and these are now known as the "white wall." To the north, we beheld a slope reaching well into the peaceful hills and plains that once were luxuriant gardens of sugar cane, indigo, cotton and fruit, providing work for hundreds of slaves. The lower level, while badly crumbling away at the base, showed a yawning gap named the "Quill," or "*Kuil*," as the Dutch called it.

In the earlier days of its history, many years before Petrus Stuyvesant ruled Statia, together with the other Dutch islands of the west, this rock was very fertile and a diligently cultivated settlement. Its mountainous sides, as far as the eye could see, were covered with luxuriant growths of forest vegetation. One visitor to Statia, in 1664, expressed it: ". . . all the compass of its sides

were highly productive; it can hardly be credited what quantities of tobacco it hath hitherto and still doth yield." It seems that tobacco has been planted from the very inception of Statia's history. The colony was originally planted in 1635 by a band of colonists from Zeeland, although it is likely that Frenchmen had lived there some time before. Strangely enough, it sported the name of Nieuw Zeeland (New Zealand) at one time, notwithstanding the designs that James, Duke of Carlisle, had had on it. It was in these days that Fort Orange was built, and, not unlike the neighboring islands, Statia began to plant tobacco that was then marketed in Zeeland.

But knowing Statia's history, our eyes were focused at once upon the rows of decaying ruins of warehouses and docks along the water's edge, silent and grim reminders of Statia's golden days. Lying west of the volcano and high above Statia Roadstead, at the foot of gorges and dells, were Oranjestad and its antiquated Fort, peacefully slumbering since bygone days.

Since we are on the subject of Statia's earlier history: Even before the advent of Rodney's chastisement Statia had not escaped the ravages of war and attack, for we learn that after the departure of de Ruyter from these waters, Edward Morgan, the Lieutenant Governor, a cousin of Henry, the buccaneer, occupied the island in 1665 with his free-booters from Jamaica. John Sympton retook the island, coming from St. Martin, in 1667, and in the ensuing year a number of Morgan's contemporaries and allies recaptured it again, so that events in Statia's history partook of a see-sawing, give-and-take affair. It remained English until 1696, when the Dutch got it back again. Desultory fighting continued, for its possession, for some years; and it might be of interest to note that when Cassard, the corsair, paid it a visit in 1713, he could find, due to Statia's pillaging by other French plunderers, but little to his liking.

At one time during its Saturnian Age, Statia was inhabited by a motley population of a quarter million people, while today its population has fallen to a mere two thousand, of whom, barring a handful of whites, the great majority are black folks and mulattos.

As we were being rowed ashore, encountering midway a small rowboat packed to the gunwales with bleating sheep, with one of

its men towing a struggling, swimming steer destined for the slaughter house in Curaçao, our gaze was drawn upwards to the Dutch flag flying just as proudly as it must have done in 1776.

Upon landing, which was not as difficult an undertaking as in neighboring Saba, and with the formalities over in a jiffy, we commenced to scale what is known as the Bay Path, a zigzagging, cobblestoned roadway built against the cliff but not nearly as difficult to negotiate as The Ladder at Saba. Upon reaching the Mission House, almost at the top of the roadway and facing a bulwark, we stopped for a moment to catch our breath and then proceeded to the Fort to call on the Gezaghheber, the government's official there, to present my credentials, graciously given me by Governor van Slobbe.

Stumbling along with unsteady steps over uneven cobblestones and past crumbling ramparts and walls, we crossed a tiny wooden bridge, at whose extremity was the gate marked "Fort Oranje," through which we entered what was the ancient Fort yard. To the left, we beheld a wooden structure, a veritable shanty wherein were housed the government offices—a whole row of them. Here, at one time in Statia's illustrious career, was the *sanctum sanctorum* of Ravena, where now, in the musty, antiquated offices reeking with old age, toiled Mynheer Schutte, the faithful servant of the Dutch Crown.

Outside was the Fort, its guns with their hooded breeches pointing valiantly out over the roadstead and in mocking subterfuge, sweeping, as it were, the approaches of the Bay Path. Half way in the middle stood the flagstaff, with topmast and cross trees, and in the center a monument in honor of the famous Dutch Admiral, Michiel Adriaanszoon de Ruyter, reminiscent of a Holland that once was great as a sea power and rememorant of a time when all strategic tops of Statia were part of one great fortification.

It was from this very flagstaff that the flag had been dipped in honor of the infant of the American Navy. It was also from these very toy-like and antiquated guns that the salute was delivered to our flag one hundred and sixty years ago.

As we stood there, reverently contemplating these quaint remnants of a bygone age, there was something intensely pathetic, almost tragic, about these dumb, inanimate figures standing there ex-

posed to the elements. One finds one's self comparing them to tombstones, as indeed they are effigies—all that actually remain to tell their tale of wars and of destruction, and of the thousands of merchantmen that looked to them for protection and security in the time when St. Eustatius was indeed the Golden Rock.

Mynheer Schutte, very likeable, young, and most hospitable, his country's faithful servant, proved, in his omnifarious functions, to be a real Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, for his very thrifty though very wealthy Curaçao Government saw fit to entrust this true "Lord High Everything Else," this "Mikado's Pooh-Bah," with a great many offices besides that of Acting Government's Chief. So, true to Cowper's statement that the very spice of life is its variety, the government threw so heavy a mantle of multiplex responsibilities upon this trusty's broad shoulders, that were he shouldering the same manifold task in our good United States, he would be soaring high among our captains of industry, and his salary would be in the many thousands.

To begin with, one of his important functions was that of the island's Tax Collector, in addition to being the Township's Mayor, the Government Notary, or *Notaris*, as the Dutch call these functionaries—a much more intricate job than that of our own American notaries. Next, he was the Government Secretary, the Colony's Prosecuting Attorney, the Township's Lawyer, and besides being the tiny island's Postmaster, he was also Correspondent for the Curaçaosche Government Bank, which gave him the added title of Government Banker. But one of the less pleasant jobs he held was that of guardian of the island's historic graves in the even more historic and older cemeteries, together with a host of other minor jobs too numerous for me to recall now. In fine, the task of filling so many functions made his job of *Gezaghebber* a veritable *E Pluribus Unum*, and one that was intricate, as well. Figure it out for yourself: As the Government Tax Collector, it was his duty to see to it, for the good of the island's treasury, that the taxpayers paid their taxes. If there were any delinquents—and I presume that island is no exception to the rule in having its conscientious tax objectors—his duty, as the Government Lawyer was to see that the taxes were paid. On the other hand, in cases where the taxes were disputed, he might be engaged as a taxpayer's lawyer.

Should the worthy citizen, however, still refuse to pay, it would behoove the Gezaghebber, as the Government's Prosecutor, to enforce the tax claim most rigidly; so that the Government's Factotum has, figuratively speaking, to divide himself in two, in order to serve two masters at the same time. A most ticklish and curious position to be in, I am sure. Actually, I do not know how he was able to run this metamorphic Government Job that was as intricate as a Chinese puzzle, because I did not tarry there long enough to become conversant with its *modus operandi*. But without wanting to be facetious, I have every good reason to believe that, as Pope so appropriately expressed it: "*De omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*"—"Things were harmoniously confused."

Mynheer Schutte showed us another interesting relic, as we nosed around the interesting Fort. It was a bronze sun-dial, mounted on a base of carved stone, near the flag-stepping. Its creeping shade in the olden days must have marked off, as it does the now-so-long-and-listless days on the somnolent island, the shorter, busier ones of times long past.

As we stopped at the edge of the rampart, looking down at what was left of the lower town and at our freighter away out in the roadstead, as it bobbed at anchor, I found it easy to visualize the flagship of de Ruyter, and the roadstead crammed with hundreds of ships, captained by shrewd Yankee skippers as much at home in Statia as they were no doubt in Salem, Falmouth and other New England harbors. The voice of Gezaghebber Schutte broke my chimera:

"The identical cannons that fired the first salute are still here," he said, "and to prove that someone in your fine country has not forgotten the great service that this tiny place rendered your embryonic colony when it was in need, a library has been endowed Statia by a Miss Gertrude Judson, supported now by some people of Curaçao and St. Eustatius, in gratitude for her contribution in bringing solace to a population sorely in need of their sole means of recreation—that of reading. This library, receiving its start with the five hundred books endowed by Miss Judson, and augmented by subsequent gifts of books from all over America and abroad, has been appropriately named the Gertrude Judson Library, in her honor."

Upon leaving the Fort, to take a look around the town that was to include also a trip to the ruins of the once-important plantations and sugar mills, I first stopped at the library—a tiny, wooden shack—for an hour of quiet reading, having been given the key by Mynheer Schutte.

No sooner had I let myself into the musty old place and opened its quaint Dutch shutters, permitting the fragrant air to come in, than I heard footsteps and a slight coughing. I turned around, believing it to be my wife, with Mynheer Schutte, when to my amazement, in the doorway I beheld a venerable little old lady who in delightful English begged my forgiveness for her intrusion—and she seemed to blush in shame. She had learned only a few minutes before, she told me, that I had come from the States, and she had hastened to the Lilliputian-like library so that she might have a word with me. And there, in this seventeenth-century setting, in the semi-dark of the quaint wooden shanty that is the Gertrude Judson Library of St. Eustatius, this nice old lady let me in on a little secret.

As her tale unfolded in a voice little above a whisper (lest the marauding spirits overhear, I thought), and while she fondly fingered an American magazine, I learned that she was a descendant of one of the Yankee skippers whose privateer had piled between the American Republic and Statia.

Ninety-four years old and hale and hearty was this dignified, white-haired little lady of lavender and lace. Surprisingly exuberant and energetic, too, despite her ripe old age, and the ravages of the tropical climate that often sap the young and prostrate the old to decay beneath the blistering sun, she possessed a *flux-de-bouche* that was truly amazing.

So she bibble-babbled merrily along, telling me that her mother, as a pretty girl of eighteen, had been a passenger, with her father (miladi's grandfather), on a Yankee skipper's brig.

"It did not take long for one of these adventurous and bright young blades to notice her, ashore, while her father attended to his trading. 'Hark ye,' they said, as they put their heads together, 'who is that lovely American maiden?' One of them, bolder than the rest—a strapping Dutchman he was—met her father in some business way, I believe, and later he was introduced to my mother.

That is how the two youngsters met." She smiled childishly, continuing:

"The young man fell head-over-ears in love with her and proposed before she returned to America with her father. She promised him she would come back. Then, rather than wait for her to return, he boarded a French bark bound for America, and the two were married there. And the same brig that had brought her first to Statia also brought them back. They settled here and he became a planter. And if you go up toward The Quill [*the former crater*], you will be able to see the ruins of what was once our dwelling and prosperous plantation," and she sighed. She had a faint recollection that there were distant relatives somewhere in New England, although she claimed never to have had any correspondence with them. Yet she was "proud indeed," as she put it, "to have good Yankee blood in my veins." She had never left the island; and although she had no radio, while telephones, bathtubs, electric lights and motor-cars were things entirely out of her realm, her knowledge of "my America," as she fondly termed it, was really astounding. When, somewhat later, she was ready to leave, and as I saw her to the door and helped her down the steps, she kissed me good-by. It was quite a coincidence, I thought, as I reflected "how small our big world really is," to discover in this venerable little lady a definite link between this Dutch colony and our America of Revolutionary days.

This, however, was not the only remaining tie that I was to see, for, when Gezaghebber Schutte took us on a voyage of discovery to the antiquated Jewish cemetery, as we climbed over barbed wire and ramped among cactus, shrub and stone, and the many shamefully-kept tombstones of once prominent Jews—that told their own tale of how pompous Curaçao Jews and a forgetful Government honor their great past—we came upon, after considerable searching, digging and cleaning of sod and dirt, the tombstone of a New England sailorman, a Connecticut Yankee who, in the earliest of our Yankee privateering days, had been laid there to rest.

In 1739, "Heeren Tien," or Council of Ten—guiding spirit of the Netherlands Republic—gave permission to the Jews of St. Eustatius to build their house of worship, then named "Honen Dalim," whose

ruins, situated curiously enough in the very backyard of Heer Schutte, we inspected. It had crumbled away badly, but whatever remained was literally robed in parasitical growths which may soon hide from view this interesting relic of Statia's past. In the same backyard was the shelter Mynheer Schutte had constructed for use during hurricanes. I also learned, while there, of a legend that a treasure was cached somewhere in the synagogue yard by erst-while prosperous Jews.

The Jews of Statia have never played as prominent a part in the growth and prosperity of that island as have their contemporaries in Curaçao, for their island had no Maduro to point to as Statia's Uncrowned King. Nevertheless, they have done their share for the island. Jewish skippers occupied themselves, after Statia's capture, not only with supplying American Revolutionaries, but it was left to a Jewish sea captain to seek aid from a Dutch squadron en route from Holland, and to solicit help, in 1785, from the French General at Martinique.

"Today," as Mynheer Schutte informed me, "not one Jew remains." The last Jew to bid this island *adieu* and leave it to its decay was Mynheer Louis Posner, dubbed by me the "Trader Horn of the Caribbean." He left Statia some fifteen years ago for Aruba, a very prosperous island renowned for the large plants of the Standard Oil and the Shell, lying on a six hours' ship's run westward of Curaçao.

Louis Posner, a most versatile trader, rotund and loquacious, hearty and keen, with a sense of humor that keeps one howling with laughter at all times of the day and night, has had a most colorful career. He, like myself, has roamed the seven seas and has had a perfectly grand time while doing it. When he came from the Dutch East Indies, he settled first in Saba as the island's Chief of Police, and there took unto himself a Saba bride, later becoming established in Statia, which proved much too dead for this live wire. So that, with a true nose for business, Louis betook himself and his family and all that he possessed to Aruba. Through hard work, courage and endurance, he attained a position in society of no mean prominence. And while it may be said that rolling stones gather no moss, Posner has gathered around him not only his Saba *wrouw*,

"Mamma Jennie" (as everyone lovingly calls her), but also eleven little and bigger Posners—for Jennie has blessed him with six sons and five daughters, one of whom is Lientje, the eldest, a fine young lady and a great help to her dad, whose private secretary she is.

I hope I am not betraying a confidence when I relate a rather curious incident pertaining to Louis, who almost despaired after his fifth-daughter-in-succession had arrived on the scene. One day, while reading an American health publication, he came upon an announcement that promised precious counsel to would-be or expectant fathers. Forthwith, he wrote to the publisher-editor over here, whose name I venture to say is known far beyond the length and breadth of our land. While I do not know what *health prescription* was given Louis or what magazine was sent him, the fact is that since his receipt of the proffered advice, he has become the father of six additional children—ALL SONS! ¹

Reluctantly, I must take leave of my friend, for the time being, but I hope to come back to him on another occasion, when describing the island of Aruba.

¹ Since writing the above, and while going over the proofs of this manuscript, a letter from Louis, post-marked "Aruba, 22 Februarie 1937" has come in—which again proves the old Dutch saying that "while speaking of the devil you step on his tail" (not intending to infer that I compare Louis to the devil). While in this letter he does not state whether there have been any additions to his jolly family, he does impart the interesting information that Aruba is all agog over a case of voodoo or witchcraft, as he calls it. It pertains to the arrest of a colored man from Jamaica who, to quote Posner, has been making some "voodoo"—"engaging in witchcraft of a highly vicious order." He is reported to have given baths of demons' blood (I wonder where he obtained it), so that the person using it would become endowed with supernatural powers. But that is not all: He is said to have also prescribed a "Banha Macacque" (literally translated means "monkey bath") which is said to work along similar lines as the Javanese Guna-Guna which, as you may remember, I first described in my Java book, and which was publicized by me in a magazine story and over the radio about six years ago. This, incidentally, has since been taken as the basic theme of a successful motion picture entitled "Goono-Goono, Love Potion."

This colored Jamaican, who proved a very convincing salesman, has been very successful—so much so that it is reported that some of the best Aruba families have wallowed in these monkey baths, but seemingly not with the desired results. The monkey bath was supposed not only to make its users very amorous, but they were said to endow an extraordinary power of attracting and inspiring love—by which even the homeliest of wenches could arouse the purest of passions for her in the handsomest swain. But as in most of these hocus-pocus measures, the system or the method failed and the Jamaican got himself "in Dutch" with the otherwise-not-so-gullible Dutch. "And," Posner concludes, "the case will come up shortly and I may act as interpreter."

So back to Statia, where we did not fail to visit the roofless ruins—now nothing but crumbling walls—of what was once the Dutch Reformed Church. Here, in groves of the pernicious, poisonous Manchineel that permeated the atmosphere with their heavy sweetness, and in the shade of the moldering stones of well-nigh forgotten and unrecognizable tombs, slumbered some of the prominent members of an earlier Dutch society—the Heyligers, van Mussendens, de Windt and Krull—all contributors to Statia's greatness.

"What happened to the rest of the guns that fired the salute?" I asked of Mynheer Schutte, when we spent an evening at his home with him and his family.

"Some time after the historic salute," Mynheer Schutte replied, "the guns were condemned, seven remaining here and four being sold to an enterprising American schooner cruising for scrap. The skipper bought four of the old cannon. The trunnions were knocked off and thrown over the cliff. Since the skipper never returned for the rest, seven have remained. They're small, maybe, and even unnoticed, but not wholly forgotten—at least by some."

Statia's soil is exceedingly fertile, as one would expect a rich, volcanic soil to be; and the Crown and the Roman Catholic Church, in their wise ministrations, have done their best to keep the populace interested in small agriculture, since anything may be grown in Statia to perfection. But the gods have not wished Statia to prosper again, whatever the reason may be for their ill treatment. Perhaps the population or even the government is actually at fault, trying to rule this faraway island with none-too-generous hand, from Curaçao.

On the whole, the populace seemed to be as poor as the proverbial "church mouse"—the more reason why means could be devised to bolster agriculture and any other industries that might bring a few pennies in the way of these people. Maybe they need a Works Progress Administrator and a C.C.C. organization, which has done so much in the less-favored sections in this country.

The Catholic Church—under the guiding and paternal hand of a most industrious Frater, and acting under the wise leadership of Curaçao's Bishop, Monsignor Verriet—with its hospital, lazarets, school and other social service measures, has done much to alleviate the ills of the populace.

Our stay in Statia, an ideal retreat, was drawing to a close; here we found rest and surcease from the worries, strife and noise that hound us, to no purpose, in the rest of the world. Its climate was salubrious and there was enough of historic mead here to keep me constantly interested.

All too soon we had to say *au revoir* to this somnolent isle, so famous in Dutch and American history, but now reconciled to her fate of basking her churches, her Fort, her relics and her Quill in a hot tropic sun, while dreaming of bygone heroic days.

Idyllic St. Martin





WOMEN CARRYING SALT
ST. MARTIN

H. H. H. 1937.

NOT FAR FROM ANGUILLA, AND near Saba and St. Eustatius, lies a dreamland isle on which nature blazons every tint and shade, a spot of perpetual summer—the island of St. Martin.

To one who has seen most of the other jewels in the enchanting diadem of the Leeward and Windward chain, St. Martin presented a fascinating picture. As our boat hove to within a very few miles from its coastline, its likeness to a village in the Bararian Alps became even more apparent. This coastline was but a narrow strip of coral sand upon which Old Sol, with true tropical thoroughness, beat down inexorably. Between the steamer's wake and the white coral beach, where the town of Philipsburg is neatly

spread out, the sails of many fishing boats glistened in the dazzling flood of light, as the soothing trade wind wafted them far out from shore.

To the west, on a hill, slumbered ancient Fort Amsterdam and Fort William—at one time in St. Martin's career strong guardians of the deeply indented bay and inlets. As far as the eye could reach were fertile meadows sprawled out over dales and glens, while hemmed in between the seashore and the mantle of verdant growth glimmered the salt pans that once made St. Martin famous.

What arrested our attention at once was the much deeper color of the turquoise-blue water, more intense in tone than I had observed around the other coral islands. As I found out later, this was caused by the trade wind, that kept its surface constantly rippling. Withal, there seemed enough fine tonality and scintilla in this scene to drive a true artist mad with joy. St. Martin therefore appeared to me as a favored child of Mother Nature. And such must have been the sight that Columbus beheld as he passed the island to the lee.

Although many travelers in their chronicles have made reference to an island identifiable as St. Martin, the first bit of definite information as to the island's existence came by way of the Conquistadores, who, if I may permit myself a bit of persiflage, traveling with their "Saints Almanac" in their pockets, named the island "Saint Martin." The purpose for which these earlier voyagers resorted to this island was to procure salt, which they took in great quantities from the existent natural salt pans along the shore. But it was again left to the Dutch to give that island greater prominence, since salt, which St. Martin possessed, had been an essential around which much of Holland's earlier navigation had revolved.

At the end of the fourteenth century, a certain Willem Beukelszoon van Biervliet had done a little inventing and had devised a new method to prepare and cure the Holland herring. Salt continued to play an important role in politics from then on, contributing in no small measure to the conquest of Curaçao and to the establishment of a definite Dutch *pied-à-terre* in the Carib-

bean. As one report of those times, sent to the Amsterdam Home Office, so significantly read: “. . . *om te hebben een bequame plaetze, daar men sout, hout ende anders mocht becomen*”—“to have a convenient place where one may procure salt, wood and other things.”

The Duke of Carlisle complained, as early as 1631, of the presence of the Dutch at St. Maarten, the island that his King had presented to him in 1627. Which proves that the Spanish Kings were not the only ones who indulged in the pastime of handing out what never had been theirs.

Nevertheless, Carlisle or no Carlisle, the tenacious Dutch remained until driven away in 1633 by the Spanish, who, upon finding the salt not important enough, abandoned the island to make way, in 1647, for some French, from neighboring St. Christoffel, and a handful of Dutch seamen off a ship of Admiral de Ruyter. The arrival of rival factions ordinarily would have been sufficient cause for much scrapping. However, for once these French and Dutch let better sense prevail by devising a method whereby the island was to be cut up, or divided, to the satisfaction of all, thus avoiding any bloodshed.

From what I have been able to glean from this legend, the slicing-up must have taken place in the following unique manner:

The colony had been abandoned, as I have brought out, by the Don, when up bobs a sloop manned with Dutch, striking the eastern promontory, and another, loaded with French adventurers, hitting the western end of the island. Both are said to have believed the island to be uninhabited. In their course of exploration, they finally met one another on the crest of a mountain. After getting over the first moments of breath-taking surprise, they showed their excellent judgment and discretion by suggesting that they talk things over, instead of drawing cutlasses. Without more ado, both bands of men encamped, all set for a quiet bit of profitable entertainment. While the Frenchmen unloaded a goodly quantity of Chambertin, their national refreshment, the Dutchmen drew beer and gin from their knapsacks, which procedure unloosened the tongues of all as the bottles were uncorked.

Now, there is nothing that accelerates good feeling and camaraderie so quickly as the mutual negotiation of a few good drinks,

even though in the end an accord may not be reached. However, Martin Thomas, for the Dutch, and Louivilliers de Poincy, for the French, reached a very satisfactory conclusion. They devised a two-man League of Nations, and, in fact, went our twentieth-century League one better—as to actual results on less dining and wining—with the following result: An agreement was consummated, whereby the dividing line of the island was fixed at the spot where a Dutchman and a Frenchman would meet in a foot-race around the island, after starting from the same point and running in opposite directions.

But, alas, the “spirits” had willed that a rotund little Dutchman, chosen by lot to do the running, had partaken a little too freely of his national liquid refreshments, while the cagey Frenchman, agile and strong, was able to carry the load of *vin du pays* that he had imbibed just a bit better.

So the historic or legendary foot-race ’round the mountain began, with the result that the lean Frenchman ramped a much greater stretch—at least two-thirds of the way—than did the hic-coughing, belching, panting, fat Dutchman who, when he arrived almost dead, had barely romped one-third of the way.

Thus it came to pass that by this agreement, entered into on the 23rd of March, 1648, on the crest of a mountain, since aptly named “Mont des Accords,” the island of St. Martin was divided into two parts, apportioning one-third to the Dutch and the remaining two-thirds to the French, with both nationals serenely living side by side, like the good neighbors they really are.

It was at Mont des Accords, when making the agreement that thus divided the island, that the terms for the gathering of salt were set down and guaranteed to all inhabitants alike. Therefore, whenever salt was about to be gathered, during the next two centuries, public notices would be posted, so that every inhabitant—French and Dutch—owning a salt raft, or a piece of ground to make his salt pile for himself and his slaves, could come and get his salt.

In common with many of the other islands, St. Martin too has had something to link it with our country, because it was here that “stiff-necked Pete,” or Governor Petrus Stuyvesant, lost his leg in an encounter with the Dons. His leg, however, was not buried

at St. Martin, but at Curaçao, while the rest of this worthy's bones have been entombed in "St. Marks-in-the-Bouwerie," in New York.

At least a dozen different governors, or patroons, as they were then called, ruled the island, while at certain intervals it was forced to change colors. That is why on the 23rd of April, 1703, the Commander of St. Eustatius, the undaunted Isaac Lamont, wrote in his letter to the Heeren Tien, the ten guiding spirits then ruling the Dutch Republic:

"Ik ben het eiland St. Martin gaan attaqueeren en hebbe hetzelve met de zeegen des Almaghtige onder accoort ingenomen. Ditto eylandt is een byzonder schoon landt en groote voordeelen aan UEd zoude kunnen brengen."

("I have attacked the island of St. Martin and have captured it with the blessings of the Almighty. This island is an exceptionally beautiful land that may bring you some great advantages.")

This capture by Lamont established Holland's supremacy and reign over St. Martin, with Statia's Governor assuming Governorship over all the three islands—Saba, St. Eustatius and St. Martin.

Another milestone in St. Martin's historic career came with the Napoleonic wars, when, in the year 1816, the Dutch King once and for all took the little mite under his protecting wing.

The settlers of St. Martin were inclined to let nature take its course, but with the advent of one John Philips, after whom the town, Philipsburg, is named, their somnolent peace was disrupted. The rather tumultuous career of Philips gave added impetus to the place and its then thriving salt industry, and it was during his administration that Fort Amsterdam was built. Today the descendants of many of the earlier settlers, while still adhering to the traditions, manners and time-honored customs of their forbears, continue to live peaceably alongside the French, as befitting citizens of any civilized nation, although its treatment by Curaçao, its well-to-do mentor, is, in common with Statia and Saba, like that of a stepchild.

To substantiate this statement, I have before me the February 6th, 1937, issue of St. Martin's leading newspaper—a unique little newspaper of the "house organ" type, printed and published by

conscientious Mr. A. R. Brouwer—in which the following news item appears: “The motor-launch ‘Ramona,’ owned in St. Kitts, on her way to St. Barths, running short of gasoline, put in at St. Martin for a fresh supply. As the Baralt [a government-subsidized ten-day service from Curaçao] had brought no gasoline for this island, they were out of stock and only due to a sloop having arrived at Marigot [French St. Martin] from St. Thomas, the American Virgin Island, that the motor-launch was able to get supplied.”

The above speaks for itself. If Uncle Sam ever forgot his charges like that, I wonder what would become of, say, our own Virgin Islands.

We looked forward to our visit to this beautiful salt island, the only one, I believe, in all the Antilles, that owes allegiance to two flags.

In configuration the island resembles an equilateral triangle, with its sides, each about seven miles in length, facing the east, northwest and southeast, respectively. It has an irregular coastline endowed with numerous inlets and bays, such as Simpson’s and Little Bay, in which there are good anchorages or places for careenage, while they present—thanks to its large lagoons—innumerable opportunities for the salt-panning industry.

With the exception of the low-lying bay, lagoons and narrow strip of sand on which Philipsburg has been laid out in Main-Street fashion, the short line of St. Martin rises in a gentle gradient out of the milky-blue sea. Here, the coast line does not present that view of steep, glistening rock which is so prevalent on some of the other coral islands, with the single exception, perhaps, of Fort Amsterdam’s locale. There, at Fort Amsterdam, the coast rises almost perpendicularly from the sea, and one conical peak on the northwestern coast, called Morne de la Fortune, forms a bold promontory which juts far out into the sea.

At varying distances from the low coastal rocks, unwearied polyps have built a ring of coral reefs which in places do not cease their toil just beneath the surface, but rear themselves high above the level of the translucent sea. Peering down through several feet of water, we admired these coral formations. Here and there, in

the wavering and dreamy aspect of the deep, we could discern the olive-brown colorizations of live coral colonies, with their growths of emerald green, red and violet. We beheld even the imperceptibly moving starfish, appearing at times like some precious jewel in the crystalline sea. In some spots, the entire surface of the coral formation seemed to have been built up from one solid foundation beneath, alive, and flowering like a garden, with myriads of shapes and forms. There was an avalanche of color among these anemones—these fantastic little animals with the hue of the coral they inhabit. In addition, there were sea lilies with waving plumes of weed and moss at their edges (possibly a detritus, or carried in from the Sargasso Sea), Hertshorn corals, and a host of other beautiful but unknown varieties.

As I have already emphasized, the town of Philipsburg, laid out lengthwise on a very narrow strip of sand that fringes the lovely bay, was clean, spacious, sparsely inhabited with a few whites among its colored population, and, as may be expected because of its location, decidedly warm. It had few, if any, attractions, for like so many of these tropic isles, this island's beauty really began well outside the confines of the town.

After a chat with Mr. Meiners, the obliging *Gezaghebber*, to whom I presented the letter of introduction from Curaçao's Governor, we inspected and marveled at the complexity of the Catholic Mission's buildings that included, among a host of other worthy places, a most up-to-date hospital and mission school—proving once more how, by dint of its extraordinary missionary zeal, the Catholic Church has become a most beneficial factor in these regions.

With a motor ride and a subsequent climb to the old Dutch Fort, whence a beautiful view of the sea and neighboring islands is commanded, and with a visit to the lagoons and the salt pans, the attractions of Philipsburg were quickly exhausted.

What impressed us most curiously, as we meandered around St. Martin, was the considerable confusion of tongues, in naming the places. This could be expected, however, in so small an island, where two different tongues are spoken. Some place-names bore a French idiom, where one would expect them to be Dutch. Hence, we discovered strange names for bodies of water and divisions of dry land, such as that of the bay on the Dutch side which bears

the French name of Grande Baie, or the Morne de la Fortune, the conical peak on the Dutch northwest coast, opposite Oostenberg, a prominent landmark a few miles farther to the south. We learned also of the existence of an "Anse de la Grande Case" and two bays sporting the names of Dutch Zee and Zuider Zee, not to forget the curious name of Mollibday Rock, which is merely a crag. In the same way, the populace on the Dutch side, much to my surprise, spoke the English language, as do their Dutch compatriots at Saba and St. Eustatius, while the inhabitants at Marigot, and elsewhere throughout the French portion of the island, used the French vernacular.

It was to the north of Philipsburg that we next directed our steps, to see the salt pans in operation. This salt-panning business, once the backbone and driving wheel of the St. Martinians, located at the Grande Salina, at the foot of St. Martin's mountainous region and just behind the town, is quite a romantic industry. As a matter of fact, with salt found, as it is, all over the world, it is easy to understand that it has been used or worked in many older countries than St. Martin, from time immemorial. Moreover, we find that from the Paleolithic Age to the Roman days, man used simply a rock salt that he licked, as a means of adding zest and seasoning to his food, in much the same way that animals do, while in Homer's time, salt was used to preserve fish in the same manner that our forefathers did and as we do to this very day. For the knowledge that the ancients used salt in various ways, we are indebted to Herodotus, since from him we learned that fish caught in the River Nile was salted. And since it would be an almost endless task, and one which would tax the reader unduly, were I to attempt to narrate here all the known historical facts about that useful commodity, let it suffice to add just these few:

Twenty-two hundred and five years before Christ, Emperor Yu ordered the Province of Shantung, in China, to supply his court with that much-needed essential, while about fifteen hundred years before Christ, the Talmudic Law prescribed that every Jew eat his meat salted. And when I add to this that Georgius Agricola, of Saxony, in his monumental "Mining and Metallurgical Book,"

published in 1556, gave us a detailed description of the salt industry in all its phases, I believe that the importance of salt in world history has been sufficiently indicated and that I may return now to the salt industry of St. Martin, whose open salt-gathering system has been in use in many places in the Old and New World, from the days of Julius Caesar.

St. Martin's method of salt-gathering used to be very primitive until not so very long ago, when the method, now in use, of filling a reservoir or passage with sea water and then permitting it to evaporate, leaving the coarse salt, was instituted. Whereas the soluble salt content of sea water is only about three per cent, this method or process of evaporation increases the salt extract to fourteen per cent. If it is permitted to stand in salt pans it attains a figure as high as fifty per cent, when the salt has thoroughly crystallized.

As we all know, sea water contains many salts; thus, its color is affected by the percentage of salt content, the color changing from blue to green, as the quantity of salt decreases, while the actual color of sea salt is generally white. Common salt, which is classed as "sweet," to distinguish it from the bitter-tasting salts of magnesium, has, in its purest state, a saline taste; it is odorless and, as everyone knows, is the most widely used in preserving foods, etc.

The salt content increases through evaporation and once this process is about complete, a settling of salt takes place. With the chloride natrium (the common kitchen variety) already crystallized, the residue is a strange admixture that the French so appropriately have termed *Eaux-Meres*. There are, naturally, many methods of making the salt water evaporate more quickly, some of which have been introduced in Turks Island, at Inagua, and at numberless salt-panning places in Europe, as well as at the Island of Madeira.

It may interest some readers to know that at one time this coarse, St. Martin salt was highly prized by the American pickling and bacon-curing industry. However, due to the uncertainty of deliveries, American buyers have had to go to Turks Island and Inagua, where, although the quality is much poorer, they can at least be sure of getting deliveries on time.

Salt production may often result in failures caused by heavy

rainfalls, in which case the operators drain the rain water off the pans. This was found possible because it had been discovered that it takes at least three to four days before the rain water will mix with salt water. By means of wells or "putters," as they are called, which are built at one end of a salt pan, the degree of evaporation of the water may be tested most accurately; it averages about forty-five inches yearly.

A sort of "mother" canal, from which the lagoons are fed, has given St. Martin a most natural advantage in its salt-making industry, although, strangely enough, its salt pans are situated from four to five feet below sea level.

The best results in salt-making have always been obtained by the ordinary, sun-drying process, since the tropic sun permits of fast evaporation in the pans (provided the rains have kept away). A lake of brine, or pickle, as it is called, forms, which is of an exceptionally high concentration, and in this the salt formation takes place. Apropos the mention of tropic rains, I might add that it has been proved that the climatic conditions in the Antilles are highly conducive to the making of salt, as in many months of the years the rate of evaporation exceeds the rainfall.

Not so long ago, St. Martin's industrialists made an attempt to emulate the salt-making methods employed in the Salins du Midi, in the southern part of France. This attempt, however, was without success—not because the method wasn't any good but because of a lack of capital, poor co-operation on the part of the St. Martin people and, possibly, poor management.

And now, let us see, briefly, what happens when the salt is ready for harvesting, which, under normal circumstances, takes place when the salt has sufficiently crystallized or caked. Or to use the vernacular of the St. Martinian, "to gauge the ripening of the pickle, or salt, by the measure of its wine-red colorization." This colorization, I learned, is caused by microscopically tiny animal life (*Monas Dunalii*).

The salt that actually is ready to be harvested has set on the bottom of the salt pan in very hard cake form. This cake, as I have already implied, is sufficiently crystallized, though not one hundred per cent pure. Its impurities are eliminated in later processes.

The salt-reaping season on these "salt plantations," as they are sometimes called, is one of great activity, usually lasting two or three months, during which time almost the entire island (whether on the Dutch or on the French side, where there are also salt pans) takes a communal hand. This procedure is analogous to the curious communistic rice-growers' organization, the "Seheke Subak" in distant Bali, of which I gave a description in the Bali chapter of my "Crossroads of the Java Sea." There, in Bali, the system works well, without fuss or bother, while here at St. Martin it sometimes works acrimoniously, for the reason that there is not the same lack of envy and jealousy and small-time pettiness that there is among the "Klian Subak," as this Balinese rice-growing-and-harvesting organization is sometimes called.

To resume, however, the crew assigned to each salt pan is composed of men and women working under an overseer, or "captain," a "mate," and ten or more "sailors," as they are called. (These ratings have thus been designated, no doubt, because of their regular profession of going to sea.) Since their pay depends on the number of barrels of salt they gather, the working hours are set by, and left to, the discretion of the captain. The most common procedure for harvesting the crop is to hack the salt during the night and then dump the cakes on dry land. Next day the salt is carted away and stowed in great heaps behind the little town of Philipsburg, where, with a little imagination, they looked to me exactly like so many conical mounds of snow. The average daily crop fluctuates between eighty and one hundred and twenty barrels. The government exacts its pound of flesh, if I may mix a metaphor, in the form of a concession tax, or export premium, of ten per cent of the nominal value of the salt.

The salt-making process, itself, is very simple. As outlined by Langemeyer in the "Curaçao Year Book": "When a lagoon is separated by a low but broken strip of land from the sea, at high tide the sea water flows into the lagoon. When the succeeding flow of sea water, together with the tropic rain, remain absent long enough, the tropic sun has, in the meantime, seen to it that the sea water in the lagoon has evaporated. Thus, a kind of pickle lake of very high concentration is born, in which, with conditions

favorable, salt formation takes place. In other words, without the intermediary of man."

The methods employed at St. Martin's salt pans are about identical to those used in Bonaire, another Dutch island lying eastward of Curaçao (and which we also visited), whose salt pans and whose flocks of flamingoes are sights we shall never forget. There the salt pans are located in two groups—those known as the pans of the low-lying west coast and those situated near Slagbaai or Slag-bay. To these latter belonged the blue, white, and orange salt pans. My attention was particularly drawn to the white pans because I was informed that the buyers in the United States preferred the salt of this pan. Its chief customers, however, are Porto Rico and Martinique. A characteristic of the salt pans at Bonaire is their hard bottom—which often makes it possible to collect the salt twice a year. The coarse salt is piled up and left in the open air, while the ground salt (refined by salt mills) is stored in warehouses, or bins.

Curaçao has had its salt pans, too, but they are of no interest today—and I have already referred to them in my last book, "Crossroads of the Caribbean Sea."

While salt for many years has been St. Martin's "salt of the earth," the island has another product, manganese, which at one time seemed to be of particular interest to an American company who worked its deposits for a short while but due, as I believe, to difficulties in transportation, abandoned the project. For the rest, aside from its salt pans and fishing and small agricultural pursuits, there is little else that contributes to the bank accounts of the St. Martinians. It cannot, therefore, be said that the island enjoys a great measure of prosperity.

However, St. Martin does own something else that, while contributing little to the people's material existence, still does not depend upon the bounty of the soil, the moods of the brine or pluvial weather. By this I mean the island's unblemished loveliness, expressed so vividly in the diversity of its Alpine-like scenery, with its glens and dales, its gorges and picturesque lagoons, all blending into one harmonious pattern.

The best method by which to see all this is by taking a cross-country motor ride (cars, competently chauffeured, may be hired

at fairly moderate rates, for these parts) from Philipsburg, on the Dutch, south-shore side, over the hills and through mountainous scenery, to Marigot, on the French and western portion of the island, a well-sheltered harbor, north of Basseterre.

The Dutch portion, well paved or asphalted, is fortunately better than the sandy, often puddle-holed and uneven French portion of the road. There was not a more inspiring sight, as we wound our way upwards, than that of the mountain scenery that opened before our eyes on either side of the road. But before coming to the mountain's crest, we stopped for a short while at a wooden structure set in a lonely spot. From the songs that came through the open door and windows, we guessed it to be St. Martin's public schoolhouse. My wife and I, only too pleased to visit this public school also, since we both had visited quite a few native schools in South America and elsewhere in the West Indies, ventured inside, where we were graciously received by the school-master. The wooden structure, divided into two fair-sized rooms, housed two classes of about thirty pupils each.

We spoke to them of our visit, of the country whence we came, etcetera, and wound up with a little pep talk that I gave, talking to them like a Dutch uncle, in English.

To top off the event, a recess was called so they could assemble outside the schoolhouse and I made a motion picture of the two classes and the teacher. This, of course, made a tremendous impression on these light- and darker-colored kiddies, and I am sure that these boys and girls who have so little diversion in their lives in comparison with our own American children, received a real thrill out of this visit, which was doubtless to provide the main topic of conversation for many moons to come.

Here was confirmed again my inherent belief in the Dutch educational system and the manner in which these children are reared, as evidenced by their graciousness and obedience. French, German and English are part of the prescribed instruction and, while Dutch is also taught and spoken in this Dutch-controlled island, it is not the chief tongue.

In the many years that I have traveled alone in far-off places, I have always made it my business to see how the other half of the world lives and learns. I have visited a great variety of schools—

often very crude, make-shift schoolhouses in jungle and forest lands—in Borneo, South America, Guiana, Africa and New Guinea, or the establishments in Bali, Java, China, Japan, and a host of other places. But I have come to realize that no matter whether the pupils are brown, yellow, black or white, or whether the teachers are attired in frock-coat, tropical suit, or draped in the garb of "the cloth," the essence of teaching is the same. There seems to exist everywhere a genuine craving for knowledge and learning. The vernacular in which it is given or the method employed makes very little difference to the general purpose. In most of these places the youngsters show decidedly good manners that bespeak the paternal and guiding hand of their mentors.

If only more schools, with better pay for the earnest teachers, in these farthest reaches, could be built, by utilizing the huge sums now spent on unnecessary armaments and devices for destruction, how much better it would be for the world at large! For knowledge is power, as Bacon has said. And in its peaceful, educational mission this power may be used, not for wanton destruction, but for ultimately destroying the very thing that armaments are now made ready to serve—war.

After leaving the schoolhouse and passing some of the most picturesque mountain scenery, with St. Martin's loftiest Paradise Peak lifting its summit more than a thousand feet above sea level, we crossed the legendary barrier, where, once over, we were on the French side of the island. At this barrier we were stopped for a brief moment by two droll French customs officers, who spoke to us in their French patois, and whose purpose in being there is not clear to me yet, for everything costs so much more on the Dutch side. This fact is responsible for a very lucrative smuggling traffic going on in French cigarettes and cigarette paper. However, true to the European system, I suppose they just had to have French officials there, anyway. We rolled merrily along the cobblestoned road, once we were on the French side, until Marigot, dead-end of the driveway, was reached. The French portion of St. Martin, including Marigot, we learned, was the place that at one time had waxed rich on the smuggling and bootlegging of liquor to America, when the Volstead Prohibition Act was still in full force.

Marigot, the capital of French St. Martin, was a somewhat pretty though unimportant little town, a dependency of Guadeloupe, and owing allegiance to France. It had one main street, at the end of which was a jetty where one of Marigot's leading citizens, Mr. Fleming, the Mayor, was very busy getting his schooner ready for a fishing expedition.

At the time of our visit, Marigot had just about awakened from its slumber, and the long street leading to the jetty was thronged with fishermen. They had arrived from Anguilla with fresh fish, and their small smacks, at this morning hour, were the center of attraction. A strange conglomerate of colored women, in their white and multicolored dresses, paraded along in a gait with that swing characteristic of all the West Indian colored folk, carrying oval and oblong trays and panniers, filled with fruits and other edibles. A very striking lot were these women, deftly balancing some of the most unusually large fish on their heads. I even spotted one woman who, having come from one of the fishing smacks, was carrying a live fish on a small contraption—such as coal heavers often use—on her woolly head. The fish, which indeed was very much alive, had strings attached to its head and its tail, both of which the colored mammy held—reminding me for all the world of the puppeteer at a Punch and Judy show. It was a wonderment to me, as I watched in keen amusement, that the fish did not wriggle itself off her cranium, but it seems that some poor fish are better behaved than others.

Marigot had not much to hold our fancy, unless it was our desire to stock up on cigarettes and to have a sort of pot-luck luncheon in the make-shift lunch room back of a French St. Martin grocery store—seemingly the only place where food, in any fashion, could be obtained.

We did not tarry here much longer, soon taking to the road again. At the French-Dutch frontier a Dutch government customs and immigration official diligently searched for cigarettes, which he never found, and we continued on our way. By steep gradients we continued our ascent, often in zigzag fashion and often negotiating hairpin corners, from whose highest points we commanded an unexcelled view of forest-clad valleys of every imaginable shade

of green, which exposed the richly loamed soil where husbandmen were toiling in the tropic sun.

We drove as far as Simpson's Bay. Here we stopped long enough to secure some Kong Shells—of which there seemed myriads—from the fisher-folk. These fisher-folk, not unlike some of the population of Saba, or the Cha-Cha's of St. Thomas, had, through intermarriage, degenerated greatly. Strange are the tales that are told of these people, among whom incest has been a none-too-uncommon practice.

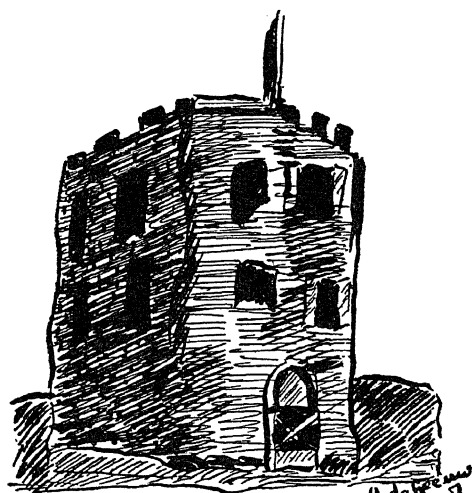
From Simpson's Bay we ascended the high table land that spread out from north to south, and whose loftiest peaks attain a height of fourteen hundred feet, until at last we rolled along again on the evenly paved Dutch road to Philipsburg. The flat strip of land, almost bereft of palms, received a goodly share of the hot tropic sun at this hour of day—it was three o'clock in the afternoon, and the whole town seemed to be well-nigh asleep.

Now that I have seen St. Martin, it is hard to say whether France or The Netherlands owns the better portion of the island. The French side is more picturesque, but the Dutch "have it on the French" in the general appearance of the Dutch section and the maintenance of their roads.

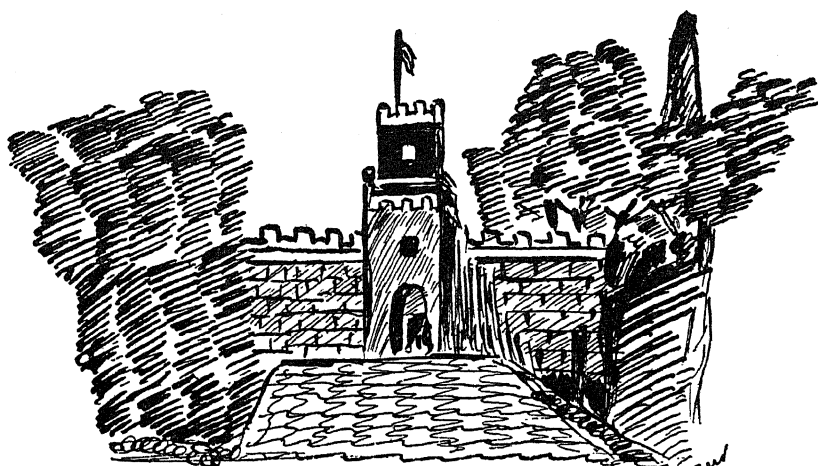
As we boarded our passenger-freighter again, St. Martin seemed indeed alluring, as seen from our vessel's deck. Not so rugged and awe-inspiring as Saba, near by, but more varied, and luxuriant beyond belief. Besides, St. Martin permeated a unique, almost indefinable atmosphere of peace, so that we were equally loath to leave this little gem, where history and romance had united with lavish nature to give it a fascination all its own.

As dusk fell over the island, like a mantle of misty azure, and its tiny lights began to spangle the distant shore, I could almost detect a murmur, subtle yet clear, reminding me of days of old, when galleons and caravels must have come to anchor here, and mailed heels of Dutch, French, British and Don, trodding the sandy shore, had sought here hidden treasures but had found—only SALT.

Virgins of Uncle Sam



BLUE BEARD CASTLE *done 1937*
ST. THOMAS
VIRGIN I



FORT CHRISTIAN

ST. THOMAS

VIRGIN ISLANDS

AT DAWN, WITH THE SUN LIKE A scarlet flash on the horizon, we approached the newly acquired domain of Uncle Sam, the Virgin Islands. The orb's beams slanted through the port-holes of my cabin, and the first flush of morning metamorphosed this temporary abode into a cubicle of reddish-gold light. So much beauty was enough to get me out of bed, notwithstanding a knock on the door from my colored factotum who brought orange juice, my morning tonic. After a quick shave and a shower-bath, I hastened on deck just as the aurora commenced to drop its effulgent shafts on the largest of the Virgins. Their lambent flames played on the hills, the castles and the fort, and "cuddled" the wide harbor.

Glorious as were the hours just before and during the early sunrise, even more enchanting was the scene that unfolded as, passing

under the lee of Cowell's Battery, located at the extreme end of a promontory, we entered the landlocked, fine harbor of St. Thomas. As our ship careened outside for a brief moment, a small launch pulled alongside, and the pilot, a Saba man named Ben Hassel, came aboard to bring us to our harbor berth.

Long before our anchor had begun its shrieking rattle through the hawser-hole and our ship had been made fast to the pier, colored boys in gaudily painted bum-boats, which were of all sizes and often too rickety to be worthy of the name boat, were clamoring for "baksheesh." For the few paltry coins that were tossed overboard, these urchins would keep us amused by diving after them in the clear water—a sight that is familiar to every traveler in these parts.

Reflected in the deep blue water, nestling at the neck of the roomy natural harbor and at the foot of surrounding hills, was a pretty little settlement, the town of St. Thomas, which was formerly known as Charlotte Amalie.

One after another, three summits rose sheer out of the ocean, their picturesque configuration and attractive grouping competing with the rich tapestry of tropical growths. Straggling the slopes and hills, and peeping through rich verdure, were the red-tile-roofed houses, the larger buildings near the shore suggesting quite a fair-sized colony.

Flanking the harbor's crescent, almost crowding each other out, were the warehouses, the wharves, and miniature fort of Dutch vintage, with Bluebeard Castle and the government-owned hotel on one side and Blackbeard Castle dominating the scene at the apex of the hillside. These castles, which are held sacred and cherished by the people of St. Thomas, added greater color to the distant panorama.

Wherever my eyes traveled, I beheld green gardens and estates, while palms with waving fronds fringed the beach, with its white rolling surf. Above it all, a dome of blue with snow-white clouds completed the arresting picture.

It is not at all unlikely that much of this entrancing beauty may have been observed by Columbus, when he discovered the Virgins on his second visit to the Indies in 1493.

On a Sunday, November the third, he had arrived at Dominica; whence he proceeded to Guadeloupe, where he tarried a couple of days. Continuing, he sailed in a northerly direction, arriving off The Virgins on Thursday, the fourteenth. The weather, as we learn from his records, must have been as obstreperous as it often becomes, even today, in these self-same regions. On the same day he dropped anchor at an island then called *Ayay* by the Indians, to which the mariner gave the name Santa Cruz (now St. Croix). Pursuing his voyage, after receiving a taste of the Indians' ferociousness, he bore down on the rest of the Virgin Islands group that came within sight, to the north. The continuance of the countless islands and the islets and the turbulent seas in the narrow channels, together with the attendant dangers caused by many submerged rocks, made the mariner very cautious, and he lay low with his caravels.

A small vessel sent by him to reconnoiter and get the true lay of the land came back with the startling report that upwards of fifty islands had been sighted. To the largest of these he gave the name Santa Ursula, while the rest he called the "Eleven Thousand Virgins." History is not clear whether St. Thomas and St. John were christened by Columbus, or whether their names were bestowed upon them by later Spanish voyagers. But this we do know: that the islands lying eastward of Porto Rico and northward of the Windwards were named as a group after Saint Ursula and her Eleven Thousand Martyrs. Of this group, Virgin Gorda (the plump one) was so named because of the island's shape, while Tortola derived its name from "turtle dove." Anegada was called by this name because it was such a flat, or inundated island, whereas Fallen Jerusalem probably was named after old Jerusalem because of the masses of strangely shaped rocks peculiar to it. And the island Jost van Dyke derived its name from the Holland buccaneer, since he had so much to do with the founding of Dutch rule on these islands.

The Virgin Islands have been the cat's-paw of the nations who for centuries have fought for territory and aggrandizement in these regions. These islands have been tossed back and forth, so to speak, and fought over by the Spanish, the French, the Dutch and the English. Yet history has been very hazy about the nationality

of the first settlers in St. Thomas and the date of their arrival there. Its commodious harbor was bound to attract the navigator who had come to these parts on exploration bent. Therefore, it is quite likely that many, such as the British and the Dutch, must have come here earlier for repair and refreshment, although they may first have used St. Croix as their landfall.

It was the French historian du Tertre who in his "*Histoire des Antilles*" related that for many years prior to 1645 (even before 1625) St. Croix had already been possessed by the Dutch, having been joined there by a handful of French refugees from St. Christopher, or St. Kitts, and whose descendants still live there. However, since the Dutch West India Company was established as early as the year 1621, it is possible that at that time its trade already extended even to St. Croix and St. Thomas.

In 1646, the more than six hundred settlers residing in St. Croix were governed by General Officers who had been appointed by the Directors of the Dutch West India Company. The Dutch, however, were not alone in their activities here, for the British also were trading in these parts during the same period; and they, in turn, were appointees of English Noblemen operating under Letters of Patent which had been granted them by Charles I. For more than two hundred and fifty years, excepting during only very brief intervals when the islands belonged to the British, the Danish Crown held its way o'er the Virgin Islands, terminating its rule on March 31, 1917, when the "Dannebrog," Denmark's national colors, were dipped for the last time from their mast on St. Thomas' miniature fort.

Why the Danish should have come to these parts is not so difficult to comprehend when we scan the pages of West India's earlier history. These chapters are replete with chronicles of the sinking of mighty galleons of Spain by foreign ships, at a time when pillage and bloodshed, and salvage of treasures were highlighted news of the day. The air reverberated with tales of brave deeds of buccaneers and filibusters who, in behalf of their foreign masters, had carved off great juicy slices of this New World domain that created new outlets for Old World commerce.

The Danes also shared the prevailing fantasy or delusion that the New World in general, and the West Indian Islands in par-

ticular, were veritable storehouses of wealth, and that one had but to some over and scoop up the gold from the soil. Wishing to share in this colonial and commercial expansion in the West Indies, a group of Danish merchant-adventurers, at Kjöbenhavn, formed the West India and Guinea Company, on March 11, 1671. Its momentous career began by taking possession of St. Thomas, which Old World traders had considered neither inhabited nor habitable. This company was regarded as among the more promising ventures of those days and its activities attracted more than ordinary attention, especially in England. The British, already having earned for themselves the epithet Conscientious Objectors (to any foreign nation setting foot over there), at once raised an indignant bellow of protest and instructed Charles Wheeler, then Governor of the Windward Islands, to object. Wheeler therefore claimed the islands for England, by right of conquest, having wrested them from the Dutch in 1667—according to him. Colonel Stapleton, successor to this worthy (Dissenter Wheeler), renewed the objection in behalf of the British Crown. But the Danes, who had invested their hard-earned Danish Crowns in this enterprise, were not willing to give up these islands without a struggle. King Christian V, who, like so many of his royal contemporaries, may have had a neat little “penny” invested in this undertaking, instructed his Envoy Extraordinary at the British Court to present the Danish case. The Envoy did his mission well, for he obtained an edict from Charles II, the British King, commanding Colonel Stapleton to leave these friendly Danes alone. (This is something that the writer has never been able to understand fully, since Charles II was hardly purported to have been such a generous soul, opposed, as he always had been, to colonial charters.)

There was general rejoicing at Kjöbenhavn. Bonfires were built from one end of Denmark to the other, while the people sang and danced, and drank much Aqua Vitae and other “schnappsy” refreshments peculiar to the country. The Danish people at large had begun to think in terms of world commerce along identical lines of their contemporaries. The hour had struck for Denmark to despatch a Governor to rule the newly acquired lands, so that Jorgen Iversen became the first governor of the Danish West Indies, arriving at St. Thomas aboard the good ship “Pharaoh” on

the 23rd of May, 1672. (This occurred only about ten years before the advent of William Penn, who arrived west of the Delaware River with his band of "thee-ing and thou-ing" Quakers, and founded what now is known as Pennsylvania.) To his amazement, the Governor discovered that the majority of the colonists were Dutch. Had he lived in this modern day, radio beams would have conveyed that information to him long before he set sail—which might have changed Danish colonial history.

The Danish colony started out with plenty of courage, a great deal of zest, and a liberal expenditure of money; but the ultimate reward was not to be commensurate with the great amounts expended. This colony, like so many of the others, had its epochs of fortune and reverses. One such epoch was the balmy and happy days before and during our American War of Independence, when St. Thomas actually was a contraband nest. Then came the era of sailing and clipper ships, when the harbor of St. Thomas was like a thriving beehive, which activity was due to its being a free port. Another milestone was reached with the advent of steamers that called for coaling stations in the West Indies. St. Thomas' position and wide-open harbor seemed to provide the very thing. Later, when shipping interests turned away from this spot, when Panama entered the coaling race, St. Thomas and The Virgins toboganned swiftly down the grade. Since then, it has had to turn to less stirring pursuits such as small-scale agriculture and the traffic in bay leaves from neighboring St. John. The making of bay rum and the few years of American prohibition, during which period the islanders undoubtedly reaped some harvest, have been this epoch's only bright spots.

Way back in 1867, parcels of land were offered for sale to the opulent youngster Uncle Sam, one of which was Alaska. In less time than it would take politicians today to begin to hem and haw over it, Alaska changed hands (I believe it took but twelve hours) for the neat bit of change of seven million dollars. Almost a similar amount was at stake for the purchase of another group of lands or islands that also figured in the program of Uncle Sam's colonial aspirations. This event took place about the time of "Unconditional Surrender" Grant.

President Andrew Jackson and his advisers had dreamed of

St. Thomas in the light of a second Gibraltar, and even before them, for years, many in Washington had cast longing eyes upon it. But for the complications (and I am thinking now of Thaddeus Stevens) that arose in the arrangements, the Virgin Islands group, encompassing St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John, would have become an American colony then. But a recalcitrant American Senate willed it otherwise, just about the time when the trial for Johnson's impeachment had come up. The Senate, in an ugly mood, failed to ratify the agreement. All this took place in 1867.

Thirty-four years later, not having quite forgotten the snub it had received from Uncle Sam, Denmark emulated the actions of our Senate in grand fashion, when it refused to sanction a second agreement, tentatively entered into in 1901.

But let us for a moment examine what was behind America's motives in its desire to acquire the Virgin Islands domain. For this it becomes necessary to go back to the time when the Monroe Doctrine was promulgated. Briefly, the circumstances that may have led to Monroe's Doctrine were as follows:

The independence of the insurgent Spanish colonies in Central and South America had been recognized by America in 1822. Ferdinand VII had been re-established on the throne of Spain in 1823. The intervention of the Holy Alliance in this Spanish matter made the American Government somewhat cautious. It feared that the monarchical repercussion or reaction might be wafted over the Atlantic and engulf the newly enfranchised South American states.

America's attitude on this, as well as on another question that pertained to the famous Ukase of Tsar Alexander I by which the Russians claimed all the Pacific Coast, etc., and which interfered with America's northwestern territorial ambitions, not only found support in Great Britain, but it even caused Canning to urge joint action by the two English-speaking countries in the event that the alliance of Pope and King caused any interference in the New World.

The precepts of Washington and Jefferson that would frown upon any such entanglements were still fresh in the minds of Monroe and the American statesmen of that time. So, buttressed by the views of Jefferson and Madison, in his message to Congress

on December 2, 1823, President Monroe advocated a policy that was to be one of absolute independence and that was to steer us clear of any foreign involvements.

To quote Monroe: "The American Continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any foreign power"; and further, Monroe said: "We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those Powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety."

This brainchild of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and possibly John Adams, closed the American lands, north and south, to any further Old World colonization. Thenceforth the Monroe Doctrine that meant, in essence, America for Americans, subject to certain modifications and laxities, has been a cardinal principle that has guided our policy in this hemisphere. It was received with popular applause in the North Americas, partly for its nationalistic ideals which proclaimed liberty and the protection thereof, and partly because it openly defied the stodgy, stilted and out-of-date policies and actions of Europe's crowned heads which might become a menace to liberty and American ideals. What, however, our statesmen may not have realized at the time when the Monroe Doctrine was annunciated was that actually, we were pulling the chestnuts out of the fire for Great Britain, as Britain's interests on the South American continent were indeed large, while our own were small. Still, Canning and Britain most surprisingly put up a hue and cry, fearing it might be used against them some time, and because we may have stolen a march on them. Whether our South American brothers or cousins or neighbors, as they are variably called, have ever appreciated the promulgation of this Doctrine and the paternal attitude of their North American cousin toward them, is something I shan't go into at this time. One fact is sure: The Doctrine was never popular there. American intervention has been quite frequent during the last forty years in this neighboring domain, for economic and political reasons. It began about the time of the Spanish American War, or a few years afterwards,

when Theodore Roosevelt uttered the following words: "It is not true that the United States of America feels any land-hunger or entertains any projects as regards the other nations of the Western Hemisphere, save such as are for their welfare . . . and all this country desires is to see neighboring countries stable, orderly and prosperous."

And again, by Theodore Roosevelt: ". . . chronic wrong-doing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation and, in the Western Hemisphere, the adherence of the U. S. A. to the Monroe Doctrine may force the U. S. A., however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrong-doing or impotence, to the exercise of an International Police Power."

What motivated the definite shaping of our policies in the West India area is now easy to see. Our Caribbean interests have been both political and economic, due to their nearness to our own shores. In addition, there were the importance of our trade, north and south, and the ever-growing investments by our American citizens, the responsibilities that have arisen out of the Panama Canal and those that may further arise, once the proposed Nicaragua Canal becomes a *fait accompli*. All of these, and many more, have embedded themselves deeply into our national life and have made us extremely Caribbean and Pan-American conscious.

Every Chief Executive from McKinley to Roosevelt, and every Secretary of State, from Crowder to Cordell Hull, at one time or another have been forced to take steps that were to be a solution to some important problem affecting the Caribbean. Even our great torch-bearer, William Jennings Bryan, in his fight against Imperialism, was directly responsible for the negotiation of the treaty with Nicaragua, followed by another, no-less-important event—that of Crowder's mission to Cuba. That in our attempts to be our neighbors' big brother we were not always successful is evidenced by the unsavory or unpleasant affairs in Haiti and Santo Domingo.

Due to the ever-changing conditions in, and in the coming-of-age of, practically all Pan-American countries, the Monroe Doctrine may have outlived its usefulness, and our neighbors actually may have found the need of the Monroe Doctrine and our so-

called benevolent protection no longer necessary. Yet, obsolete or dormant, the Monroe Doctrine, or whatever has taken its place under these changed, New World conditions, still serves a definite purpose: that of keeping a status quo in the Caribbean and South American areas. Due to its elasticity, it can be given any interpretation and character that either our government or any other government desires to place on it.

If our country were as Imperialistic as some critics have painted it, the United States would not have had to be content with the purchase of a mere handful of little islands such as The Virgins; Uncle Sam could have done his land-grabbing in as ruthless a manner as Italy has done in Ethiopia or as Japan in China. It would not have taken very much to claim many Caribbean islands, which, on account of their strategic position as coaling stations or oil-refining depots (such as Dutch Aruba and Curaçao), have made them so valuable.

Ever since the opening of the Panama Canal, naval strategy and naval policy have been important factors. Many islands in the Caribbean Sea area and along the Mexican Gulf and South American Main are undoubtedly of great importance as naval bases, which at some time or other could be used against our own country. It is for this very reason that the status of such bases as exist today should be kept intact and remain in the hands of their present possessors. To which end the Monroe Doctrine and our Good Neighbor Policy may serve a definite, useful purpose.

At the beginning of this century, about the time when America's era of police duty in the Caribbean arose (an era that was to last for more than twenty years), a German steamship company, pursuing a then unchecked policy of peaceful penetration, established itself in quite an imposing and bombastic manner at St. Thomas, with the result that many were soon speaking of the Danish Virgin Islands as the "German Virgin Islands." Fortunately, the World War put an end to all this unwelcome German angling for Caribbean power. If the Virgin Islands were German controlled today, they might even become a hotbed or hatchery for Nazi plots and propaganda with which to flood our shores.

It was in the year 1916, with The Virgins' strategic position greatly strengthened by the completion of the Panama Canal, that

our negotiations with Denmark for the purchase of this coaling and naval base were resumed. The United States, considering the time opportune, offered to purchase the islands for an even larger sum than that originally bid—our ante was raised to twenty-five million dollars. Denmark's interest in the West Indies having waned, twenty-five million dollars was undoubtedly considered by them found money and hardly a sum to be sneezed at. So, in 1917, both the U. S. Senate and the Danish Landsting at last affixed their official seal and approval, and the "Dannebrog" made way for our Stars and Stripes, ending forever Denmark's position as a colonizing power in the New World.

With the Virgin Islands' earlier history somewhat defined, let us now locate the island of St. Thomas a little more closely. At one time, it must have been one of the many volcanic craters that sprawled about the Caribbean Andean area. Actually the ridge of a small chain of submerged mountains, a range of dome-shaped hills (attaining a height of about fifteen hundred feet), runs from east to west throughout the island's entire length. About the center, and on the southernmost extremity, another range takes its rise, running eastward, and parallel to the first range, both ranges being joined in the center. One side of an extinct crater that has remained intact forms the backbone of the island.

In consequence of the past activity of its volcano or volcanoes that ordinarily would make for a soil of great fertility, one would be led to believe that the island is very fertile. Such, however, is not the case, and this is easily explained by the basic fact that its soil is not porous but of a very rocky foundation. Due to a constantly blazing sun, the soil becomes easily parched and is therefore not conducive to agriculture of a permanently profitable nature.

The climate is salubrious, though at times quite hot. Situated within the tropic zone, its heat nevertheless is often modified by invigorating trade winds that, due to the size of the island and the almost total absence of woodlands and forests, always hit the island freshly from the sea. This trade wind is very much of a blessing as it reaches the residences nestled in the hills, but once this trade wind is wanting, the place often becomes too hot for real enjoyment. It is generally quite dry at St. Thomas during the winter

months, during which season there is an even temperature throughout the days and nights.

Charlotte Amalie, cooped up as it is by the hills, is often unbearably hot, and while its hill resorts offer some solace, they do not compensate for the excessive heat below.

Exploring the town that, as I emphasized, looked quite inviting from a distance, I found that it loses much of that attraction upon closer acquaintance. After a good walk (you may decide to ride) from the long and hot pier where the liners dock, Norre Gade, St. Thomas' main street, is reached, where, proudly flying from the small post office masthead, an American flag proclaims the undeniable statement that Uncle Sam is boss here. A visit to the fort interested me more than did the customary mad dash to the shops and stores, although, it is true, the shops provide cool shelter from the glare of the sun.

Fort Christian, originally a windmill but now converted into a jail, at first seemed devoid of attraction, but a climb up one of its battlements offered a view that is a real and delightful compensation.

Whatever it was, St. Thomas did not impress me in the same way that many of the other islands did. But it may be that this is merely an illusion, one due to the fact that many of the gentler, softer things which make other islands so different and harmonious have been removed by Uncle Sam, and have had to give way to, or make way for—in the mad stride for progress—the cruder things of life.

One of my fellow passengers, an American woman, expressed her sentiments along these pertinent lines, as we visited Bluebeard Castle, where Uncle Sam, or rather the New Deal, is playing host in a spick-and-span and up-to-date hotel:

"I should have liked to have seen St. Thomas as it must have been years ago, when fierce whiskered pirates and such-like gentlemen, with cutlass and swords dangling from their belts and scabbards, roamed and swaggered through the town's dusty streets. It would be a temporary change from our present materialistic and stereotyped motorcar-bathtub-refrigerator and gadget era, and one that would be such a welcome relief. I would also have liked to take a peep at the romantic place in the old days, at the time of the

redoubtable Kidd, when bearded seamen, bronzed and weather-stained, and bedecked with priceless jewelry and silks, were hilariously kicking up the dust along the quay. Can you imagine yourself listening to these seamen and pirates bragging and ranting as they gambled their hard-fought-for loot away in shops and inns? It is too bad that so many of these shops have been torn down or have disappeared."

Such was the gist of the pretty American lady's nostalgic longings for the he-man period! While her cravings may be a little far-fetched in some respects, in a way one may have to agree with her resentment at the advent of our dollar-made civilization that often blights instead of maintains, and that in its wild scramble to standardize, hopelessly fails to differentiate.

As we stood there talking, my eyes discerned, as I looked over the castle's rampart, port-side way, wharves, cranes, lighters, the twentieth-century coaling contraptions, oil tanks and other signs of progress and advancement. Below throbbed the hot town in all its bustling activity and whose numberless American motorcars, scurrying in all directions, were sure-fire signs of returning prosperity.

It cannot be denied that the work of the W.P.A. (Works Progress Administration) has also been instrumental in setting upon the Virgin Islands the stamp of returning better days. A few years ago the plan was evolved to try to make of these decayed little islands of St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix some sort of tourist haven, in competition with the other islands near by. To a certain extent—since it is yet too early to judge final results—the plan has worked, and it has drawn quite a few thousands to our newest possessions. Not only have preliminary improvements been made in St. Thomas, to meet the first batch of exacting American travelers, but at neighboring St. John, which is still *terra incognita* to many, large tracts of land have been taken, cottages and other places have been set up to be used as tourist developments, and private interests also have joined in the undertaking.

Knowing full well that American travelers are rather critical *hombres*, who not only know the values of things but are the first to condemn a place and label it "punk" if accommodations aren't in every way desirable, the W.P.A. realized quite correctly that

its first move should be a first-class hotel that for its location and scenery would be unique, and for comfort unexcelled—and for these reasons would be talked about, even by the most exacting and seasoned globe-trotter. This idea has been exactly and fully realized. No better spot could have been chosen than the Castle, around which this tip-top hotel has been built.

Realizing, too, that the American soon tires of the simple, romantic things about which a European could rave for endless hours and days, our government has looked at the whole thing from a more practical angle, and the W.P.A., knowing how well we like to swim and loll around under multicolored beach umbrellas, began by improving the bathing beaches and by building beach cottages. It also built, with bountiful hands, golf courses; and mindful, in addition, of our Americans' hobby of, and love for, flowers, it built parks and supplemented the mountain roads with trails for lovers of horseback riding.

This was the sort of thing that, before ever I had seen St. Thomas, I had for years advocated in other Caribbean islands—more especially in Curaçao and Aruba (where today there is a large American colony), and even at Dutch Guiana, on the mainland, where anxious authorities have consistently complained of a lack of tourists. At these last named, however, they have failed to realize that in order to enable the tourist to fully appreciate and be attracted to the natural wonders of the colony, they must first do some spending on their own—perhaps not as generously as Uncle Sam can afford, but at least enough to make for more comfort, so that discriminating Americans may feel that there are attempts being made to give them value for their money. It is one thing to print eloquently worded and artistically photographed pamphlets and books as bait to draw the tourist to “come and see these wonders.” It is another thing, once the tourist *has* spent his good money to have a look at the wonders that have been so rhapsodized, to see to it that at least it all comes up to expectation, and that he finds one or more good hotels that meet our American standards and are equivalent to the sort of recreation and divertissement to which we are accustomed over here. If these places fall short of his expectation, the traveler feels he might just as well have stayed at home or have chosen at least an itinerary covering

those places that he is certain will cater to his twentieth-century requirements. It is all very well for Curaçao, for example, to become best known as the tourist *shopping center*. This may and does pour thousands of dollars into the coffers of already-well-to-do merchants, but, as one hotel owner so poignantly remarked, "What is the good of seeing all that good money flow into one channel? What we are after are tourists that want to stay, not for one, or three or ten days, but for a couple of weeks—which, instead, would mean an influx of good American dollars for a host of other business places."

St. Thomas had seen the handwriting on the wall; at least so it seemed to me. It realized that with an increased tourist traffic, business in the rest of the island would also improve. Thus, I learned that in St. Thomas agriculture has been looking up and more fields have been planted with sugar cane. This, in turn, has trebled the rum industry, since the traveling American and other visitors found the flavor of the Virgin Islands' rum agreeable to their palates. (According to reports, this rum is finding an ever-increasing market here in the United States. The infiltration of tourists who stayed there because they found the hotels and cottages to their liking, has encouraged small agriculturists to bolster their truck farming, and I venture to say that St. Thomas and St. Croix are now self-supporting in the way of vegetables and other eatables.) I also learned from a report issued by Governor Cramer that private American capital has begun to make its entree in the development of St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John. A rum company, financed by American capital, and a tourist development company, financed by local and foreign interests, have been established at St. Thomas. In St. John, a desirable tract has been taken over for the establishment of a winter tourist resort. Creating of homesteads (those built of concrete and replacing the ramshackle ones that were the sore-spots existent everywhere one went) and the birth of self-supporting, small land-owners give one an idea of the broad-minded manner in which a wise, far-seeing government has planned the attempt to make this new American domain a success. From Governor Cramer's report I learned that in addition to the foregoing the government has gone in for the buying of small estates in a large way. It subdivided

these estates in six-acre parcels, enabling the native truck farmers and others to purchase them, in addition to low-cost dwellings, on an easy payment plan. How well all this works out time alone will tell. That it has all been carefully devised, and that superficially the plan seems to be working, no one can deny.

And now let's take a look at the town, and, as is quite natural, at those old standbys, Bluebeard and Blackbeard Castles, both built



by the Danes around 1700, and soft-spots in the hearts of the people of St. Thomas.

Bluebeard Castle, which actually forms the nucleus of the American government-owned hotel, and through whose embrasures a beautiful panorama of St. Thomas unfolds, is said to have been at one time a Dutch windmill, and not a pirate's castle, as so many in St. Thomas would have you believe. This castle, standing on the mizzentop, if we prefer to believe the legend, is said to have been the abode of the wife-killer, Perrault, while he was visiting this alluring West Indian *congeries* of romance. (Perrault, by the way, never visited these parts.)

The other one, Blackbeard Castle, is said to have been the abode of the notorious, incomparable blackguard, Teach, a native of England, who fought in the War of Spanish Succession and who

subsequently became a pirate. This ruffian surrounded himself with as daring a bunch of gangsters as any that ever foregathered around a cutthroat. He was no pretty sight to see: An immense beard, from which he derived his name, and which was as long as the list of crimes he committed, covered his ugly face, while braids and pigtails had their ends turned up over his fantastically long ears. His stature was immense, and in attack he showed himself in all his awe-inspiring glory—when, good psychologist that he was, he was wont to place burning matches in his beard and hair to add to his already fearsome appearance. But once engaged in his most nefarious practice, he would go attired in wide breeches and a long coat, a shoddy, open shirt with hairy chest exposed adding the finishing touches to his savage appearance, with belts and a couple of fierce-looking scabbards, and a brace of three loaded pistols slung over his shoulders. Such was Edward Teach, the daring scoundrel whose looks were as black as his demeanor was mean. His viciousness and his fearless exploits, said to have had no counterpart in those days, made him the terror of the Caribbean, until in the year 1718 his troop of gangsters disbanded, and he lost his damnable hide somewhere off the Carolina coast, thus ending his career of butchery and roguery. It is a fact that, bereft of these corsair, pirate and buccaneer tales, St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John undoubtedly would lose much of their romantic attraction for the thousands that now flock to these places. Yet, it might be a pity to rob romance of its truth and the people of St. Thomas of a favorite and profitable idea.

Upon visiting the famous pink-colored Dutch Church, located in a side street, I fell in with a local historian, a *café-au-lait* colored gentleman who, upon closer acquaintance appeared to have more knowledge inside his fuzzy-haired cranium about the history of this place and its association with pirates than might be dug out of many history books. He actually saved me much valuable time. His face was bumpy and wrinkled; and at times it would twist as he sniffled—not because of a cold but because of a nervous affliction; yet this talkative and exuberant scholar (John Pumpkin was his delectable-sounding name) quite impressed me as an orator. And when he was not talking, which was on rare occasions, his mouth would remain wide open just the same—due, no doubt, to a

case of "almondoids," as he put it, and from which he said he was suffering very much.

Unceremoniously seeking the shade of the steps of the pink-colored church, which action my historical friend appeared to regard as sacrilege, I encouraged him to talk on, and the well-read Mr. Pumpkin retailed, sniffing all the while, what he knew about the pirates and filibusters that had infested this place at some time, long ago.

"This Dutch church is a historic landmark. It has been in use since long before our American War of Independence," he said. I glanced at him sidewise as he said "our War of Independence," but then it dawned upon me that actually it is only since 1917 that he has been a citizen of the American Virgins.

"Many of these pirates and buccaneers," he continued, "were devout worshipers and often frequented this very church. With prayer books under their arms they would come here to ask Divine aid before setting out on their spoliation."

I listened with absorption, rarely removing my eyes from a little bump on Mr. Pumpkin's nose, as he continued: "Do you know that Sir Francis Drake, who frequented this port, before leading his gang to rapine and filibusterism, even assumed the role of preacher when he led his men in prayer? Then there was a certain Captain Sharpe, who, before murdering an Indian at Iquique, would first wash his hands in the church font; and before I forget it," sniffed Pumpkin, "there was also a man named De Lussan who would march his ruffians to mass before setting out on a pillage or a massacre. Yes, sir."

While he discoursed upon many matters historic, my colored friend failed to mention the Dutch or Flemish Esquemeling, another one of that group of religious pirates or pious buccaneers whose antics compared with those in a certain category of financial or industrial highlights of today, our twentieth-century pirates.

When he was through with his extremely adventurous escapades, Esquemeling sailed for home, where he then became highly religious, hoping in this manner, like so many transgressors, to atone for his sinful ways. Whether he succeeded in his spiritual attempts, history is unable to tell us, and for very obvious reasons. But that this fellow has left something for posterity there is no

doubt. For it is to Esquemeling, by dint of his extraordinary flair for observation and writing, that we are indebted for some intimate biographies of such other cutthroats as that old bondslave, Sir Henry Morgan, Rock the Brazilian, François l'Olonnois (the last-named hero, should you not know it, did not hesitate to chew a man's heart, tearing it from the poor, wretched victim, or to lick his sword every time he decapitated a Spaniard), and the buccaneer, Pierre le Grand. Many of them belonged to that famous vengeful brotherhood, "The Brethren of the Coast," and settled on isolated strongholds, whence their forays against the Don took place. They plundered, ravished, captured and burned as methodically and as ruthlessly as the Spaniards and committed many outrageous practices, the like of which our world has never seen, and in which many rulers in European lands—blessed souls that were these pious ones—did not shrink from conniving.

One of the more human of all the earlier buccaneers was Sir Francis Drake, whose exploits, while still excelling the others in daring, could have served as a fair pattern for them. Drake was known for his honest methods of dealing.

That some of the buccaneers and pirates often had distinct motives in mind when they set out upon their practices is evidenced by that colorful character and member of the French nobility, *Sieur Raveneau de Lussan*. This scheming worthy turned to privateering because he wanted to grab enough gold to pay off his debts incurred in France. After a short but very bloody career, this romantic buccaneer had plundered enough to enable him to return to his beloved France and his hastily interrupted amorous escapades, where he also became a very much respected nobleman (?)!

Other pirates were prompted by patriotic principles and motives. There was, for instance, one, a Frenchman, *Monsieur Montbars*, who earned for himself the nickname "Exterminator," who became virtuously enraged with the narrations of the worthy *Frater de las Casas*, in which the depredations and vile methods of the *Conquistadores* had been so graphically depicted. They made a deep impression upon him, so he set out on what became a lustful undertaking of revenge and bloodshed with this one aim in mind: to exterminate the Spaniard. But, alas, history tells us that he did not

get very far in his laudable attempt, for, although he did his very best, he died very young.

If I were asked by those with a vigorous appetite for romance and adventure who I would class among the most colorful of pirates and buccaneers of all time, I would not include Sir Henry Morgan, who had united all the buccaneers in the capture and wreckage of Panama City; neither would my choice fall upon Bartholomew Sharpe, nor on the Earl of Cumberland, or l'Olonnois, or even Esquemeling, the Barber. But I would begin with Dampier; next in line would come the children's hero, Captain William Kidd, whose fate, as you will remember, terminated at the end of a rope; and with our own French-American, Jean Lafitte, the pirate of the Gulf, last.

William Dampier, born in Somerset in 1652, the son of a farmer and at heart a naturalist, received his apprenticeship as a mariner, though he did not sail the Seven Seas, as so many others had done. Instead, in his youth, he set out for America—Newfoundland, to be exact—where his first real adventure began. He must have amounted to something in the baby years of his occupation here because that delightful church-goer, and, if I may permit myself the little quip, old "Pagan," Samuel Pepys, when Secretary to the Admiralty, took a great interest in the lad. Later, in 1698, when Dampier came to the attention of the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Earl of Oxford, he was often seen eating his nuts and sipping his port with this same Samuel Pepys.

Dampier's "odyssey" reads to me as real adventure should. He commanded the H.M.S. "Roebuck" on a voyage of exploration to New Holland, and when he returned, not having had enough adventure to his liking, he entered into business for himself. That he didn't do so badly in this undertaking is indicated by the astounding fact that he earned an aggregate booty of one hundred seventy thousand pounds sterling, a tremendous sum for those days. What is also interesting is that in his meanderings he stopped off at Juan Fernandez, where he liberated the sailor, Alexander Selkirk, immortalized by Daniel Defoe in his story of Robinson Crusoe.

When this filibuster came back, he was at once proclaimed a hero and became highly respected. He began writing a book, as so many of us travelers do, which, before he was finished, had grown

into four bulky volumes, entitled "A Voyage Around the World," which for variety of exploits and delightful description of adventure imparts a fascination that one vainly looks for in many adventure descriptions.

As for the capable and bold William Kidd, that once respectable New York burgher and sea captain, in whose spoils our ever-so-worthy Dutch citizens gladly shared, was born about 1645 to 1650, at Greenock on the Clyde, in Renfrewshire, Scotland. He had as keen an eye for picking his deals as he had for choosing a wife. In one such instance, a Mrs. Oort, possibly a Dutch woman, provided him well with enough money and real estate to start him in his business. The parcel of land that she once owned and that she gave to him as her contribution to their material happiness, is the same ground on which now stands the building of that financial octopus, the National City Bank. It was actually from New York that his trading with pirates was started.

It was a forbear of the Delano Roosevelts—a certain Peter de la Noy (or Ney, as it would have been were he still living in Flanders), then mayor of New York, who preferred charges against him. Kidd, like so many of these "Letters-of-Marque men," as the privateers were called, sailed under orders from some very high personages (his associates), whose names were Bellomont, Earl of Oxford, and Lord Somers. While commissioning Kidd to do the "dirty work" for a paltry ten per cent of the spoils, these aristocratic, though scheming, less courageous capitalists, conveniently passed the buck and got the best of the bargain, sharing none of the risks. They escaped with their heads, whereas Kidd was sentenced to "hang by the neck till dead." This syndicate bought a vessel called "The Adventure," and in this Kidd's activities began. A dispute, or possibly mutiny, ensued among Kidd's crew about his refusal to sanction the piracy of an English vessel. Kidd terminated the broil when he hit and killed, with an iron bucket, one William Moore, the ship's quartermaster. Then, after some more pillaging, Kidd and his ship encountered the "Quedah Merchant," bearing costly fineries belonging to an Indian grandee or rajah. This vessel was taken by Kidd in a manner worthy of the best traditions becoming a pirate. Since his own vessel, which was leaking very badly, was hardly as seaworthy as the "Quedah Mer-

chant," he transferred his crew (who bore him much ill feeling on account of the old fracas with Moore); and they were as glad to leave him at Madagascar, the then-famous pirate rendezvous, as Kidd was to get rid of them. He sailed for home, with a new complement, and as he struck the Caribbean waters he learned the bad news that he had been posted on the boards (I believe it was at Lloyds Coffee Shop, in London) as a pirate.

Hiding his ship somewhere off lovely Haiti and leaving it in charge of a man from St. Thomas, he transferred himself to a small sloop and sailed for America, where he landed at a place called Gardiner's Island, in Long Island Sound, and which only recently was put up for auction. Much of his treasure was found here by early colonists. Then he committed a grave mistake. While penning a most lucid report to his noble superior, Lord Bellomont, he also sent the Lord's charming wife, Lady Bellomont, a diamond tiara or some such "trifle" as a gift. That was his undoing! He was apprehended by the New York governor—I believe it was Governor Fletcher—who, according to the scandal mongers, was Kidd's own partner in some of the deals. Even his New York backers and friends turned their hypocritical faces from him. (Incidentally, it should be said here, without reflecting upon the other good qualities of the race, that the Dutch of Nieuw Amsterdam found it extremely difficult to stay honest on the high seas or to keep from engaging in ventures of so shady a nature as these. Hence, many of these earlier Dutch merchants in what is now New York may have had a not-so-delicate finger in the luscious piracy pie. At the *Stadhuis* of Nieuw Amsterdam, many of Kidd's deals may have been hatched.) Kidd, the goat, was thrown into jail, then sent to England to be tried. As in all such matters, when dealing with men sporting high-sounding names, these were scared out of their wits lest they be drawn into the mess. So poor Kidd, with not a friend to *his* name, after spending a year in Old Bailey, suffered the injustice of a cruel English law of those days, that of not being allowed any counsel. Nevertheless, he did have a couple of nin-compoops or ignoramuses assigned to him as nestors, since neither of his case nor of *lex scripta*, or *jus civile*, had they the slightest notion. The result was that on May 8th and 9th, Captain Kidd, assisted (?) by that pair of so-called prompters, a Mr. Lemmon

and a Mr. Oldish, sat through the trial, and was speedily convicted not only of killing a mutinous quartermaster but of piracy as well. By a strange quirk of fate, his worthy associate, the Earl of Bellomont, aggravated by the scandal, died of gout, at New York, three days before Kidd's hanging.

And so it came to pass that Captain William Kidd, aged fifty-six, possibly one of the most interesting and less bloodthirsty of pirates that history has known, met his fate, together with Darby Mullins, a member of his company, at Execution Dock, in London, on the twelfth of May of the year 1701, when both were "hanged by the neck until dead."

And for those who would like to read the oldest description of these proceedings, I should like to recommend the following title:

"A full account of the Proceedings in relation to Captain Kidd, in two letters, written by a person of Quality, to a Kinsman of the Earl of Bellomont, in Ireland. Printed and sold by the Booksellers of London, and Westminster in 1701."

It is in connection with Captain Kidd's visit to St. Thomas that an interesting story is told by that engaging story-teller and Dominican Friar, Père Labat.

Père Labat was very complacent and lenient at all times toward the "Buccaneering" Order. This trait was so vividly displayed when he visited St. Thomas, about the time when Captain Kidd had left a cargo of valuable goods, that the good captain had "inadvertently" taken along from the "Quedah Merchant" already referred to. It was the expedient custom of pirates, in order to raise quick cash, to dispose of their loot at much below market prices, in good old "fire sale" fashion. These goods were subsequently auctioned off, and Père Labat, attending, curiously enough could not resist taking advantage of the bargains. Praying the Lord's forgiveness for his transgression, the good friar bought plenty, as his autobiography states; and the purchases of exceptionally choice goods rapidly depleted his pocketbook, so that all too soon he had invested his last remaining francs. But, as the friar informs us, his credit was first class, and he was enabled to borrow all the money he needed—just on his honest face, and thereupon resumed his shopping once more.

With the redoubtable Kidd disposed of, I am left with one more pirate, Jean Lafitte, another of the colorful characters, whose romantic life would, it seems to me, make as colorful a story as any for its mead of adventure, amorous activities, politics, history, and a glamorous picture of Louisiana. Since his battleground, or scene of action, was the American Southland, a brief description of this *bell-raiser* should not be amiss at this juncture.

Lafitte came from France as a youth and, not unlike so many others, made America his adopted country. He settled at New Orleans, in Louisiana, and at once opened a blacksmith shop. He was ambitious, with an insatiable urge to secure for himself a place in the sun, no matter by what means or methods. At some time in his young life he became leader of the Baratarians, smugglers who made their headquarters in the low-lying islands in the Mexican Gulf, off the coast of Louisiana. His other ventures included, besides those in his spare moments of amorous pursuits (in one of these a beautiful mulatto girl having become his devoted paramour and slave), privateering and smuggling and operating against the Spanish slave ships. From all indications, Lafitte must have been the last known of that order in pirate annals.

Why Lafitte and his many cohorts picked New Orleans and the new state of Louisiana for their shady business is not difficult to guess. The corsairs and filibusters, having made the French West Indies waters until the last quarter of the eighteenth century their base of operation, were forced to move their businesses and change their calling cards to Louisiana after the British had made things too hot for them elsewhere. Here, at Louisiana, they found things much to their liking. At first, Jean and his brother acted as middlemen for the smugglers and merchants, staying cunningly in the background, as was the wont of so many of their contemporaries. Their wares consisted not only of "Black Ebony," or slaves, but of all other saleable wares. It was later, at Barataria, the swampy sea region lying southward of the Gulf and along the Mississippi banks, that the Brothers Lafitte joined forces with the smugglers and privateers. They were assisted by another and no-less-daring trader, a man named Dominique You, a most colorful character, who, from his boyhood, had been a sea rover and who eventually became Jean's most trusted emissary and aide.

I have every reason to believe, if my memory serves me correctly, that Vincent Nolte's autobiography, "The Adventures of a Merchant," on which Hervey Allen's "Anthony Adverse" has been based, referred to Merchant Lafitte on many occasions, as well as by colorful descriptions, to the strange happenings of those days.

Not wishing at this time to elaborate upon Lafitte's playing up to politics, as that would take numberless pages more, suffice it to say that Lafitte offered his services and those of his privateers undoubtedly as a political move (and maybe with a purely selfish motive) to Andrew Jackson. He joined forces with General Jackson and defeated the British on the plains of Chalmette. This was a feather in the cap of Lafitte, and he was particularly pleased with the way things were going. But it also caused him to get a particularly "swelled head," so that he became even more boisterous and daring—which started him on the downhill path. He was arrested and convicted, but later pardoned, for the crimes committed earlier. His star commenced to rise again, but only for a spell. Under President Madison's regime, Lafitte again became Louisiana's popular hero. Not satisfied with his laurels or willing to leave well enough alone, he lent a deaf ear to his paramour, who, with that intuition so common to women, had realized for a long time that if he persisted in his illicit dealings, he would not escape a certain sordid fate.

A past-master at double-dealing, however, Lafitte persisted in his choice of the crooked path—that of privateering and outlawing. This was to become his undoing, and the beginning of the end of a life that in some ways had been illustrious, and on the other hand replete with episodes of looting, privateering, killing, love-making and intrigue. Having been ordered by the U. S. Government to relinquish his hold on Galveston, he set fire to the place and left there, about 1821, taking the last of his private fleet with him. It was about that year that he died—which was about four years before the era of the privateer, corsair and buccaneer came to an end.

There has been much speculation as to where, exactly, Lafitte died. While weltering in the chaos that has been the lot of many historians in figuring this out, it has been rumored that this famous privateer breathed his last somewhere off Campeche, off that same

north coast of Yucatan that, strangely enough, was the scene of some of his greatest successes.

Taking my leave now of Lafitte and the others of these roistering, fiery, bewhiskered pirates and filibusters, as they must have slang-whangered through these identical crooked and steep St. Thomas streets, I decided to take a trip to French-Town and have a look at the Cha-Chas.

These hardened Cha-Chas, whose ancestors are said to have been the Norman French of Brittany, and who came to St. Thomas by way of the French island of St. Bartholomew, are possibly of similar stock as those curious fisher-folk encountered at Simpson's Bay, in St. Martin. One rarely meets with such strange but interesting people.

Their abode is on a hill, where these tall and lean descendants of the white settlers from France do things today exactly as did their forefathers for many generations in Brittany. They reminded me at first of the Saba people. There were some whose faces were deeply bronzed or reddened by the tropical sun, while others—especially the women and the younger folks—displayed an almost sallow pallor, undoubtedly the result of much intermarrying that has been going on for countless years. Yet it seemed strange for a fisher-folk, living mostly out-of-doors, to have such sallow complexions.

Not unlike the people of Saba, the Cha-Chas also have clung tenaciously to an ideal of keeping the race pure, so that there has occurred no miscegenation in their midst. Intermarrying with the colored people of St. Thomas has, therefore, been taboo. As I have inferred already, when treating of the Saba people, a natural consequence of a social order built on genealogical line is the problem of endogamy, or marriage within the family, reaching its highest form. At times it assumes the character of incest, and so it may have been at French-Town. Not unlike another curious people—the Quakers and the Puritans—the Cha-Chas fundamentally detest idleness, vanity, and sensuousness, and they are definitely fixed in their ways. To borrow the expression from "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town," one might feel inclined to call these Cha-Chas somewhat "pixilated."

When I inquired whence originated their name, Cha-Cha, it was brought out that it was derived from their exclamations of annoyance, or anger, when they were heard to utter, "Cha, cha!"

Rare are the customs of these Cha-Chas, and as eccentric as they must have been where their forefathers lived. Cha-Cha mothers and fathers, praised be the Lord, are still the head of the household. No matter how old the children may be, and contrary to the olden rule that "faint heart never won fair lady," no lovelorn Cha-Cha swain will propose to a Cha-Cha girl himself, but will let his mamma take matters in hand. It is she who first goes and talks it over with the mamma of the girl of his choice. The Cha-Cha mammas do all the arranging, and attend to the preliminaries of the wedding. This method forestalls marriages of undue haste, and you may "bet your boots" that his people would rather see their children in Hades than sanction the heterodox cradle marriages that have been so much in the news of late in our southern United States, and even in New York. One outstanding fact remains, with the Cha-Chas: If a swain has no background or a secure economic foundation on which to build their future life, marriage for him is taboo. But if it is shown that the groom owns a house, where he can shelter his bride-to-be, then all is well in the land of the Cha-Cha, and the marriage may be consummated without any hitch. Then the customary presentation of the rings takes place. These rings are not the ordinary types of engagement or marriage rings that other people use, if you please, but are symbols of a guarantee that their intentions are of the best. This works both ways—for the girl and the boy. There is, however, a third ring, which the youth presents to his girl and which, curiously enough, is called "jealousy" ring. This is actually the first ring he hands to her, and for her it is the most important one, because it betokens that he will be faithful to her.

While the Cha-Cha men eke out a scanty existence with the catch of their nets, the Cha-Cha women are proficient weavers, and basketry is another of their accomplishments. In the patterns of these products, they have religiously adhered to the Breton traditions of centuries ago. They not only weave straw hats—very large ones called *jipijapa* hats—but baskets, bags, the indispensable

fans, and many other things, combining cheerful colors that blend harmoniously and that American travelers as a rule like so well.

Their funeral practices resemble those of Saba and are old customs handed down from generation to generation: The whole village, old and young, can be seen trudging behind the coffin on the deceased's last trek.

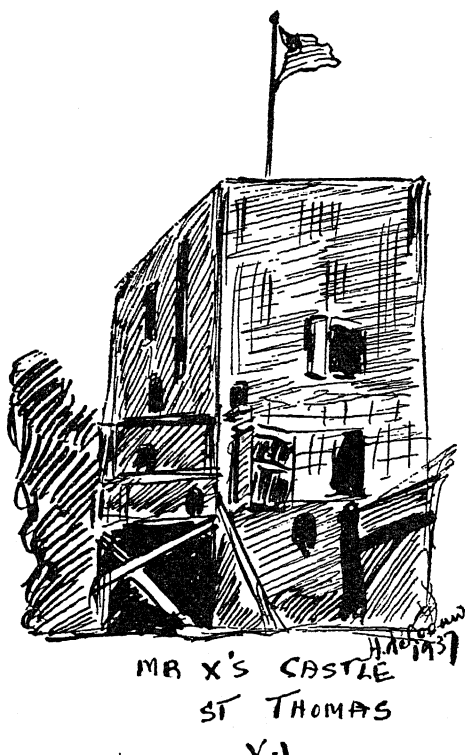
As is easy to understand, among such a self-sacrificing, honest people, their diet must be simple, and so it is. It comprises, for its foundation, much fish, starches and fruits, and when their catch of fish or the sale of home-made articles is favored by the gods, they afford themselves the luxury of an occasional piece of chicken or other meat.

I spent considerable time among these simple, sturdy and pleasing folk, who demurely and serenely, and without complaint, live an existence almost incomprehensible to the modern world outside. To their way of thinking, they lead a harmonious sort of life, undisturbed by the elsewhere-hectic world. The problems of that small world in which they live—which to them is not devoid of its perplexities—are settled for them by a pious devotion and a religious faith molded into a pattern as they advanced through the ages, with the astounding result that those Cha-Chas are content and entirely happy—something admirable to find amidst the madness of our modern world. I returned to St. Thomas after my visit to the Cha-Chas feeling thoroughly at peace with the world, having imbibed freely of this peace-of-mind tonic, and it dawned upon me again that true happiness is not a matter of how many dollars one possesses but essentially is a state of mind.

I had learned that in a castle in the hills there lived a wealthy American, a man whose great hobby, so I learned, was to help in making St. Thomas a real American tourist haven. Determined as I was to see St. Thomas from the mountain summit where, according to legend, Sir Francis Drake must have sat scheming and pondering over his adventurous plans, I motored up the steep and often rough zigzagging road to what is known as Mr. X's castle. (This gentleman displayed an abhorrence of any sort of publicity in which his name might be highlighted, and I had to make him a solemn promise that I would not use his name, hence, Mr. X.)

Before my car had reached the summit, I got out in order to take

a look at the commanding vista of St. Thomas proper spread out beneath me. Visible from my eminence, it was nestled between palms and a green sweep of verdure. The lovely sight included also the clot that was Cha-Cha Town, the many surrounding hills, the harbor below, and Krum Bay, that for many years has been



known as the Marine Graveyard for storm-beaten and condemned ships.

Scaling the grade somewhat higher, I stopped at the American's castle, from which place of vantage an even more commanding view is obtained. Negotiating a bend—what appeared to be the very summit of the hill—I sat down on a bench called "Drake's Seat," whence a panoramic view unfolded that for enchantment almost equals the beauty of the Isle of Capri. The sun was high and casting down its rays like golden javelins. Ahead shimmered the bay—almost parallel with the coast line—with countless small islands,

in configuration like little mud-pies, dotting the wide expanse; while far, far below was the sandy white beach where sea bathing was going on. Far away to the lee, I beheld Sail Rock, a mere speck that has fooled many mariners in the olden days. During the War of Independence, the French mistook this rock for a British frigate and gave it a blast from their broadside. Having thus given myself a treat, I went back to town again, unable to forget this captivating spot so swiftly. This short but pleasant trip to Drake's Seat was so serene and so delightful that no tourist to St. Thomas will want to miss it.

The largest of the American Virgins is St. Croix, often referred to as the Test Tube for the New Deal, or Santa Cruz, as Columbus named it. It is much more tropical, with its palms and coral beaches, and even more charmingly verdured than its neighbor, St. Thomas, from which it is separated by a thirty-six-mile run. Here sugar and the rest of the New Deal accomplishments are supreme. Presenting otherwise little change from the average West Indian island port, Frederiksted, an obscure place of three thousand souls, has nothing but a roadstead for ships to careen and is connected with Christiansted, the other port of the island, by a well-made road. It is a delight to take a motor-jaunt from place to place, through endless fields of sugar cane and up and down hillsides where frameworks of planters' dwellings and mills and ruins of windmills rise against an intensely tropical verdure.

It is at St. Croix that the government-owned rum distilleries are located. Here is produced, as one of the many ramifications of the New Deal, the exact replica of the Cruzian rum that for more than two centuries has been produced here by the people. It is marked now under a distinctive label, "Government House Rum."

It may be a revelation for the traveler to these parts to pay a short visit to the sugar plantations and refineries, the Agricultural Experimental Stations, and the homesteading projects elaborated upon in the preceding chapter. I, at least, was compelled to admire many of its indubitable advantages.

There is something else at St. Croix that always attracts the American tourist—at least those who find added stimulation in our American history and its connection with far-off or distant foreign

places—and that is the fact that it was at St. Croix, at the warehouses of a certain Nicolas Crujer, a Danish merchant, that Alexander Hamilton worked as a boy.

Hamilton, celebrated statesman and patriot, first treasurer of the United States, and often called an American Colossus, was born in the West Indies—Nevis, to be exact—a descendant of the Hamiltons of Cambusketh who received the first royal grant from King Robert III, early in the fifteenth century. His father, James Hamilton, a Scotchman, quit Scotland to seek his fortune elsewhere, and came to St. Kitts, in the Lesser Antilles. Briefly, the circumstances preceding the birth of Alexander are as follows:

James Hamilton fell in love with Rachael Lavine, the bride of John Michael Lavine, a wealthy Danish-Jew residing in St. Croix, and whose short wedded life was a very inharmonious, unhappy one. Rachael, by the way, was a daughter of Dr. John and Mary Fawcett, of Nevis. As life became more and more unbearable for her, Rachael left Lavine and returned to Nevis, to be joined by Hamilton, where they lived together, unable to resort to a divorce. (Because Lavine had intimated he would oppose it strenuously, since the law was on his side, she having left his bed and board.) To them was born, on January 11, 1757, a son, Alexander Hamilton. James Hamilton was not entirely successful in business and, about the time when his second son was born, he left Nevis to seek his fortune elsewhere, so his common-law wife returned to St. Croix, taking her children with her. In the meantime, Lavine had been granted a divorce, a prerogative that had been denied Rachael for the very reason that it was she who had absented herself from their home. (Hamilton and Rachael never married legally; as a matter of fact this was impossible by virtue of Hamilton's having left her long before Lavine secured the divorce.) Rachael died in February, 1766, at the age of thirty-two. She was buried in St. Croix, where her grave has since become a shrine. And a record of her death, for those that would like to see it, is preserved in the register of St. John's Church, at Christiansted. Incidentally, it may be found of interest to note that there is also an entry in this register indicating that she willed a few slaves to her sons. Lavine, under the existing laws of the land, however, claimed these slaves for his only lawful heir, Peter Lavine.

The discordant note in the melody of life came to Alexander in his very early years.

At the time of his mother's death, he was but twelve years old. In his youth he received instruction from a Jewish teacher until, a year after the death of his mother, his relatives sent him to school. He learned Hebrew, too, though his chief study was French. In 1769 he was withdrawn from school to serve an apprenticeship with Nicolas Crujer, a rich merchant at St. Croix. He was such a bright and willing lad that at the age of fourteen, he often assumed entire charge of the business of Crujer. A certain Hugh Knox, a youthful scholar from the British Isles, who had come to America to establish a classical school at Newcastle County, subsequently arrived in St. Croix, and the two young men became staunch friends. It was Knox who did much to mold the character of Hamilton that was to make him the great man he later became.

We are not quite sure whether a severe hurricane plaguing St. Croix in 1772, that demolished five hundred houses, had anything to do with Hamilton's decision to leave for the States—but what it did do for him was to draw the attention of many to the fine piece of reporting done by him concerning the havoc created by the hurricane and that appeared in the *Christiansted Journal*. Whatever it may have been that inspired him to set sail for America, we do know that, together with another staunch friend, a youth named Edward Stevens, he landed at Boston in the month of October, 1772. Hamilton was but fifteen then.

Records show, too, that Hamilton entered the grammar school at Elizabethtown, New Jersey, and that his fiery brain led him to writing. In a short time, he prepared himself for college, and he entered Kings (now Columbia) while being aided thereto by a private tutor. Our country at that particular time was experiencing the greatest events in all its history, and the American colonies were on the verge of a revolt. The greatest men of the time were grappling with momentous questions, and Hamilton lost no time in putting himself heart and soul into the fray. At a patriotic rally held on July 6, 1774, this boy-patriot, this youthful Demosthenes, launched forth in masterful elocution, holding his hearers spell-bound, as he directed his fulminations against the Tories. His ora-

tory possessed all the qualities of fervent popular intensity that, amid the gloom that prevailed in those days, played a prominent part in his early career. The seed, for him, had taken root. From then on his climb to bigger things was rapid. This idealist realized early in life that ideals without power would be of no earthly consequence. He was fully aware that once he attained his ideal, he would have to be big and powerful enough to shoulder all the accruing responsibilities.

Later on when New York raised a company to aid the cause, Hamilton became its leader, and no one, so it is said, fought more valiantly than did Hamilton in the retreat up the Hudson. He had begun his ride on the crest of popularity's wave. But then boomed the cannon that toppled the walls of Jericho. Came America's War for Independence, in which Alexander took a most active part. In 1777, he was appointed Aide to Washington, receiving the rank of lieutenant-colonel. This was a difficult assignment. He also became known as the "pen" of the army, as a result of which General Washington's letters have become renowned for that dignity of manner and elegance of style unrivaled in all military annals. Alexander was then but twenty-one years old.

He married Elizabeth Schuyler, daughter of General Philip Schuyler, and as soon as the war was over, he began the practice of law, and was admitted to the Bar in 1782. Hamilton was then but twenty-five years old.

Throughout all his young life, his was a strenuous, hard-working existence, in which hours, to him, were like minutes and minutes came far too soon. Was it any wonderment then that this Colossus, or genius, caused the great statesman and politician, Talleryrand, when seeing Hamilton at work, to express himself in the following terms: "I have seen a man laboring at night to support his family, while making the fortune of a nation. I consider Napoleon, Fox and Hamilton, the three greatest men of our epoch."

And, as for the most untimely end of this great American, not wishing to cover the incidents leading to his death in all their detail, let me be brief: He lost his life in a duel with his arch enemy, Burr, on July 11, 1804, at Weehawken, on the Jersey shore.

Hamilton was honest to the extreme, and it is a known fact that

he resigned his office as Treasurer of the United States (then commanding a salary of thirty-five hundred dollars a year) because, as he stated, the salary was far too small to do justice to such an important office. This progenitor of American High Finance and founder of the Republican Party died almost a pauper—a man who by sheer force of will, his indomitable spirit and ingenuity had lifted himself to a position high in American and World History. Truly, a great American!

And now let us look at some of St. Croix's historical events. It was formerly owned by Louis XIV; from his royal hands it was turned over to the Knights of Malta, in 1653, until finally ceded to Denmark in 1733. It had a rather turbulent career, like most other places saddled with the influx of slaves—a system that was an economic absurdity and the cancer of primitive society. St. Croix, too, experienced a vicious slave insurrection. The revolt took its rise about twenty miles from the city. Hundreds of Negroes, many of them fresh from the African homeland, formed various bands, bringing terror to the white population. Men and women fled for their lives. The colonists, like the colonists elsewhere, had to pay heavily in blood for their follies peculiar to civilization. The country was devastated and its many plantations destroyed and never rebuilt, the ruins of which to this day are grim reminders of those earlier unfortunate times.

Investigating the cause for this severe slave insurrection, it appears that one of the ulcers that had undermined the system, and had caused the slaves to rise, was the decree issued by King Christian VII in 1847 proclaiming that all children born after the 28th of July were to be free. This decree was of little consolation to the slaves, whose relatives had already been assured their freedom under British rule some years before. As disorder increased and as it deepened, the Danish governor took a wise step that was supposed to restore tranquillity, one by which all slaves were set free, although he replaced slavery with a new system that well-nigh destroyed the island and almost razed the town to the ground.

It took many years of good-will and understanding among the

colonists before St. Croix was able to emerge from this state and make its feeble come-back.

To the man in the street, St. Thomas is the best known of the three larger Virgin Islands. If I had my choice, I would pick St. Croix, or even St. John, an appendage of St. Thomas, a rugged, mountainous island, that has little to offer to the ordinary traveler, since of comforts there are none.

St. John figures conspicuously in the growth of bay leaves, so widely used by St. Thomasians for the bay rum hair tonic industry. Of St. Croix it can be said that possessing that healthful climate and exquisite scenery, it provides a haven for those seeking escape from the severity of our winters, at very little cost. What could be more harmonious than to sojourn there under azurean skies, beside an indigo sea and amidst foliage of myriad-tinted green?

St. Kitts
THE MOTHER OF THE
ANTILLES



BRIMSTONE HILL
ST KITTS



SIR THOMAS WARNER'S TOMBSTONE
IN ST THOMAS CHURCHYARD
ST KITTS

COASTING ALONG FROM ST. EU-
tatus to St. Christopher, from which the former is separated by
a seven-mile channel only at Basseterre Roadstead, the capital of
St. Kitts was reached.

There was a splash, a roar and rattle as the anchor raced through
the pipes. The throbbing of our steamer's engine ceased, and the
large liner came to a full stop.

The island of Nevis, to which a small schooner was to take us in
a few days, appeared very close, its symmetrical cone rising from
the water with tiny white clouds wrapped around its summit.

Before us on the shore of the open roadstead and situated at the
southern end of the oval-shaped island, was Basseterre, the capital,
and a pretty sight at that, with Mount Misery, the most northerly
peak of a lofty mountainous range, rearing its thirty-seven hun-
dred and eleven feet of sharply outlined strength against the sky.

In coming to St. Kitts, we had two distinct objects in view. The
first was to pay an extended visit of exploration to Brimstone Hill

which, historically, is the island's most important spot. If we are to believe the Indian legend or the Carib tradition, Brimstone Hill is the summit of Mount Misery that has been blown out bodily and deposited upside down on its present site. The other purpose for our stay in St. Kitts was to satisfy my ethnological curiosity, since I had heard that both St. Kitts and Nevis were rich in traces of Carib occupancy. I was, therefore, more than anxious to see the collection of stone implements and fragments of Carib origin, the fruit of the painstaking efforts of a Mr. E. Y. Connell at Lime Kiln.

But let us look back for a moment at the geographical and historical background of an island that, as my title indicates, must have been the oldest island in the British West Indies domain.

The island of St. Kitts is, geographically, the smallest island discovered by Columbus on his second voyage and which he named St. Christopher. Alighting upon it he found the island inhabited by the Caribs, who called it "Liamuiga," or "The Fertile"—a name that seems to have been very well chosen. The origin of its name seems to have been equally well wrapped in mystery. Some historians hazard a guess that Mount Misery must have suggested to the mind of the great mariner the statue of St. Christopher, carrying our Saviour on his shoulder. The island at one time was known as Mewars' Hope, it having been suggested that Merwar, or Meward, was merely a word made up of the first syllable of the names of Merriemfield and Warner, both being names of men very closely connected with the island's earlier history. Whatever the origin of its first name, we do know for a certainty that it was christened St. Kitts by the English at a much later date, which name it has held until this present day.

Concerning the question as to who were the earliest known settlers on this tiny but rich island, that honor must fall to an Englishman: On the 28th of January, in the year 1623, Captain Thomas Warner of the King's Bodyguard, accompanied by his wife and son and fourteen other adventurers, landed at St. Kitts on the identical spot where Old Road now stands. They began the arduous adventure of living here by cultivating tobacco. This, however, was not Warner's first introduction to these parts. In 1620 this scion of a good Suffolk family but one, alas, without for-

tune, attracted by the possibilities of tobacco-growing, set out with Captain North to Guiana. The company was not too successful; at least it was dissolved, and Warner decided to leave Guiana and, with a few companions, set sail to plant other lands. It is easy to see why he chose St. Kitts and not another island, since he had been advised to seek his haven as far removed as possible from the Spanish and the Dutch.

The experimental crop of tobacco that the good man raised at St. Kitts offered little or no profit. To add insult to injury, a severe hurricane destroyed most of his crop and all of his buildings. But, undaunted, he had enough left to return to England and seek there a new backer who would be willing to finance a new expedition, to furnish supplies while the tobacco was growing, and to look after the marketing of future crops. Warner was fortunate in finding such a backer, a Mr. Merrieffield, a banker at London. He then returned once more, in 1624, well fitted out on the good ship "Hopewell," and with additional recruits so that he could operate on a much larger scale. His first crop was sent back to England and the tobacco was pronounced to be of exceptional good quality and fetched a fairly good price.

Incidentally, tobacco has been known in England for quite a long while. It had been grown quite extensively in Virginia about that time, by a John Rolfe (the husband of Pocahontas) and when it had become pretty much of an industry in Virginia its governor, Ralph Lane, and Sir J. Hawkins introduced it in England. As the story goes, Ralph Lane brought home "the clay," and he, together with Raleigh, were the originators of the habit of perfuming, smoking and also "the drinking of tobacco" in public. King James alluded to the gluttonous exercise of this "evil vanitie," and aside from issuing "counterblasts" against tobacco and against Raleigh for having introduced this sinful thing, also was the more-or-less indirect reason for the following little ditty, current in those days:

"A gentleman, called King James,
In quilted doublet and great trunk breeches,
Who held in abhorrence tobacco and witches."

In 1625 Warner again visited his home country. This time he engaged the interest of the Earl of Carlisle who procured for him

an exclusive grant from King Charles the First on September 13th, 1625. By this grant, Warner, as the King's Lieutenant, was given the power to govern, rule, order and trade "the islands of St. Christopher, Nevis, Barbados and Montserate." It is said that Sieur d'Esnambuc, a French gentleman arriving with a company of thirty men on the very day that Warner laid claim to the place (in the year 1623), was given permission by Warner to land and to establish himself in what is now Basseterre, six miles from the English settlement. This, however, is denied by du Tertre, who claims that his countrymen never left France until 1625.

Together, the British and the French, after fierce fighting, exterminated the Caribs, and a treaty was then drawn up between the two nations, confirming the English in the possession of the central portion of the island and leaving the rest to the French. But the joint occupation, which had been intended as a friendly solution to the ending of all broils, resulted in nearly a century of bloodshed and strife.

When Thomas Warner was knighted by the King, his occupation embraced much more than merely tobacco-planting. It ranged from the settling of boundary disputes to expeditions to neighboring islands. It also included occasional armed arguments with the Don. This latter venture, however, was not fraught with much success, for in 1629, a Spanish fleet wreaked its usual efficient revenge upon the colonists, leaving but a few Englishmen alive in the hills. But with the Spaniards gone, the few remaining English re-occupied not only their former portion but also that abandoned by the French, and in 1632 the islands of Antigua and Montserrat were added to the domain of Warner. When the French returned, there naturally arose more squabbles. It was about this time, that is, in 1639, that Warner and a Captain General of the French, Le Bailly de Poincy, made an arrangement, because of a glut on the English market, to destroy and to prohibit the replanting of all tobacco plants for the next eighteen months. Warner may have been one of the earliest-known promulgators of one of the subdivisions of the N.R.A. If this be so, then he lived about three hundred years too soon.

Sir Thomas Warner breathed his last in the year 1648, and was

laid to rest in St. Thomas' Church, Middle Island, to which shrine I paid a visit.

After the death of Warner there ensued a new seesaw struggle between the British and the French, and the manufacture of sugar, born out of the 1639 agreement, was commenced in 1643. The colony now entered a period of great wealth, and enjoyed seventy years of blessed peace. There then ensued a number of wars between the French and the British once more, during which occurred the memorable siege of Brimstone Hill, the Gibraltar of the West Indies, to which Southey refers as "the only bright gleam of sunshine during the whole of the miserable war," and that Froude called "England's Salamis."

St. Kitts was restored to Great Britain by the Treaty of Versailles and, since 1783, has remained a British possession. The twenty-three-mile-long island, with an area of sixty-eight square miles, is of volcanic origin though its earthquakes have been very mild in character, and is mountainous, its central part consisting of a range of lofty mountains. It boasts a climate that is delightfully bracing and salubrious, with cool winds continually blowing across the island, so that it is seldom too hot for comfort on St. Kitts. In consequence of the past activity of the volcano its soil is one of great natural fertility. It is friable and quickly absorbs the rain, whose average is from forty-eight to seventy inches, according to location, and which occurs mainly in the winter months of November to June. During this rainy season, however, many floods occur which prove harmful to the cultivation and to the roads.

A thirty-mile drive around the island, which for others may or may not include a visit to Brimstone Hill, depending on one's time, afforded me no mean pleasure for, apart from the sheer attractiveness of its natural garden beauty, St. Kitts hides among its hills a great variety of wild plants, native trees and shrubs. Endless fields of sugar cane with their countless flowers, or arrows as they are called, standing ten to twelve feet high, with delicate silver-purple inflorescence imparting a silvery luster to the whole of the countryside, presented a picture of entrancing delight. Alternating with the cane, which, as always in these islands, retains its tropical and unfettered aspect, were fields of cotton, renowned for

its unusually fine quality. With their bright yellow flowers, which presented a welcome contrast to the eye, they reminded me of our own American southlands. The forests and fields, valleys and gorges abound in maize, yams and cassava, bananas and plantain; and weirder fruits and flowers, such as frangipani, with their



ST MARY'S CHURCH

ST. KITTS

voluptuous coloring, are seen commonly around the delightful little dwellings and the estates.

Continuing past plantations, many of which had names that were reminiscent of the early settlers, such as John Estridge and Philip Lambert, and coming to a place where a clear view of Saba and St. Eustatius is obtained, we motored through an avenue of sea-grapes and almond trees until we arrived at a place called Black Rocks. There we alighted, as the view is eminently worth while. We walked to the edge of the cliff where, far below us, we beheld masses of black lava against which the billows dashed their white foam-heads. Returning to the main road again, we stopped for a moment at St. John's Churchyard and the Estridge vault. At many points of this ride a view of Mount Misery, together with a rock rising six hundred feet sheer from the crater, can be discerned—

all adding a touch of greatness to the forest-clad slopes beneath.

Coming close now to Brimstone Hill, which is exactly nine miles from where we started, and the entrance to which is marked by two cannon standing upright with their muzzles pointing heavenwards, we decided to leave the visit for another occasion as I had some other business to do of a more sacred nature. We therefore continued to Middle Hill Village, whose churchyard holds the tomb of Sir Thomas Warner, and where a shelter has been put over the tomb to preserve the inscriptions and the epitaph, which reads as follows:

An Epitath uon The . . .
 Noble and Much lamented Gent' Sir
 Tho Warner K Lieitenant
 General of y^r Carribee
 Ieland && Gover r of ye
 island of St Christ
 who departed this
 Life the 10 of
 March 1648

First Read, then weepe when thou art hereby taught
 That Warner lyes interred here, one that bought,
 With losse of Noble bloud the Illustrious Name,
 of a comader Greate in Acts of Fame.

Trayn'd from his youth in Armes, his courage bold,
 Attempted brave Exploites, and Uncontrold
 By fortunes fiercest frownes, hee still gave forth
 Large Narratives of Military Worth.

Written with his sword's poynt but what is man
 —midst of his glory and who can
 —this life A moment since that hee
 —By Sea and Land so longe kept free
 —Mortal strokes at lenth did yeeld
 —ace) to conquering Death the field
 —fine Coronat

We stood here for a few moments in contemplation and reverie before the tomb of this "Noble and Much Lamented Gent," "this Maker of the British West Indian Empire," whose name undoubtedly ranks no less than those of Cabot, Stanley, Cecil Rhodes, or Clive.

A few hundred yards above the road I inspected an old stone on

whose sides an interesting Carib inscription is still readable. Then, leaving Middle Road, we stopped for a moment at Stone Fort, where the invading Carib Indians were defeated and almost decimated in 1627. In this leisurely fashion we continued until we came to Lime Kiln and the home of Mr. Connell, where I was fortunate indeed to inspect a collection of Carib curios and fragments and stone implements which, for their number and scarcity, may be second to none. For years Mr. Connell, a government man, has devoted his spare time to the exploration of the grounds and the rocks at St. Kitts, in quest of these Carib relics. Both St. Kitts and Nevis, near by, are singularly rich in these Carib traces. The search for an ultimate collection of these Indian stone implements, shell objects and pottery fragments has been a hobby of many people, but I have reason to believe that the most complete collection that I have ever seen of these extinct West Indian Carib relics belonged to Mr. Connell, there at Lime Kiln. We beheld a fine specimen of Carib inscription at Wingfield estate, near Old Road, while another, found on the beach close to the water's edge, below Harts' estate, and also some fine Carib tracings on the sides of the ravine up Pelham River, would interest many lovers of old Indian culture visiting this island.

It was at St. Kitts that I managed to add to my knowledge of the Carib Indian. Of course, many ethnologists and travelers of repute have given us excellent records of these warlike people, but I was most anxious to learn more, despite the fact that the origin of the Carib race is not easy to trace, though I have spent many years in research work of my own attempting to solve the problem at first hand. A solution has been attempted by making a tentative study of the handful of Caribs living here and there, but this is almost too ridiculous even to discuss. The Reverend Brett, in his very commendable work on Guiana and who was present at the finding of vestiges of an ancient stone civilization, left us a remarkable record. Du Tertre and Labat and other French historians have left no less important works on the subject. For the benefit of those who may wish to know more about the Caribs, this remarkable people whose name has been given to the area or locale with which this present volume deals, I shall jot down herewith just a few of my personal observations.

Cuba, Santo Domingo, Jamaica and the many other larger islands in this domain seem to have been the *habitat natalis*, or the new domicile, of a mild and very timid race, at the time of their discovery, who are generally called Arowaks, or Aruouagues, by Labat. (I have given a full description of these peaceful denizens in my last volume, "Crossroads of the Caribbean Sea.")

The smaller islands, or Lesser Antilles, which lie in a cluster and stretch all the way from St. Thomas to Trinidad, or Tobago, seem to have been populated, at that same period, by a warlike and indomitable race of savages, known as Charaibes, or Caribs. They heroically resisted every attempt at colonization and preferred death to slavery which, as they had learned, had become the sad fate of the peoples of the larger islands. Whence these warlike people derived their name has been a matter for much speculation. Ever since the oldest days the French spoke of Caraïbes, the English colonists referred in their reports to Charribs or Caribeese, even the settlers on the island of Dominica referred to Criebe or Karinaku, while the Spaniards, who were the first ones to have any contact with them, tried to see in the name a derivation from the name Kairabu.

It has been the subject of considerable conjecture as to where these Caribs may have come from. Local tradition asserts that this highly primitive race inhabiting the smaller islands were appendages or offshoots of a once-large nation. At some early period, whose date is lost in the farthest reaches of time, these fierce Caribs arrived in canoe fleets from somewhere. Like locusts they swooped down upon the Leeward and Windward chain of islands. Their habit was to exterminate all the males and fructify the women in order to secure offspring; in some cases they even married the women.

Physically, the Carib type, as judged by the handful that survives today and that I have had an opportunity to visit in Guiana, Dominica, St. Vincent, and elsewhere, show the Mongolian characteristics. I had great difficulty in finding any difference between a Carib youngster and a Chinese youngster. They have the same blue-black hair, prominent cheekbones, a rather flat nose, and the color of a true Carib (a doubt now arises as to whether the Caribs

that I ran across were of true Carib stock) is almost yellow, or at least as light as copper.

The Caribs may be truly said to have been the island Vikings of the Caribbean. They were found by the companions and the successors of Columbus to be spreading terror and desolation over a wide area. When the ships "Nino" and "Guerra," after coasting along the Guianas, were attacked by eighteen war canoes of Caribs and after the Spaniards had dispersed them with a barrage of gunfire, they captured a canoe with one of the Carib warriors in it. In the bottom of the canoe they found a prisoner, bound hand and foot, who was an Indian of another nation. He informed the Spaniards that the Caribs had been on a marauding expedition along the neighboring islands and coast. They would, so his tale went, shut themselves up by night in a stockade that they carried with them from which they would sally forth at the break of day and begin their hellish joyride of plunder and the taking of captives. The Indian said he had been one of seven prisoners. His companions had been calmly devoured before his eyes, and he himself had been awaiting the like fate. The Spaniards were highly indignant at the cruelty of the Caribs but, as firm believers in the doctrine of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," they passed judgment that the Carib should be beaten to death by the Indian as his meed of revenge.

What attracted the earlier voyagers most about the Caribs was their passionate predilection for human cutlets. It was rarely, however, that they consumed members of their own tribe and in order therefore to satisfy their craving, they would put to sea in frail dugouts, in quest of the Arowak whose flesh they seemed especially to prefer.

It was in this fashion that they ruled in the greater islands to the north and south, and they terrorized the neighboring islands, harassing the peaceable inhabitants. They ate the men, carried off the women, attacked them and often ate them too. They emasculated the boys; and those that were born of their female captives they fed as a luxury, or delicacy, to be eaten at their celebrations.

The arrival of the Spaniards and other Europeans did not diminish the Carib's man-eating propensities. On the contrary, it gave

him a chance for variety. They had a particular penchant for the Spanish invaders, whose flesh they considered a rare delicacy for which they would often cruise in their war-canoes for hundreds of miles. From this it becomes evident that the earlier colonists had no easy time of it, and lived in continual terror. The records show that, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, these ogres had carried off from the island of Sancti Johannis (our present Porto Rico) more than five thousand men, all to be consumed. Besides showing an epicurean taste for the flesh of the Dons, Britons, Dutchmen, Negroes or even the Arowaks, they also had a preference for certain color and nationality. For instance, in one chronicle I read that they considered the flesh of the French the most delicate and easy to digest, curious as this may sound, while the flesh of the Spaniard was considered very tough and harder on their digestive tracts. In Administrator Bell's report of Dominica, I read a story of Laborde who, while on one of his jaunts in St. Vincent, met a talkative Carib who happened to be gnawing at the remains of a roasted human foot. This Carib matter-of-factly informed Laborde that he ate only Arowaks. He turned up his nose, he said, at many others; and as for Christians, "Bah!" he said. "They give me the belly ache!"

To reduce their power and numbers, Columbus proposed that they should be captured and sent to Spain as slaves, in exchange for livestock to be furnished to the colonies he had established. It was about this time that the famous apostle of the Indies, Bartholomew de las Casas, one of Columbus' shipmates on his first voyage, advised a course which has been a blot upon his great name. In one of his few inauspicious moments he advised that the Negroes should be brought to the New World, but that the Indians should be saved. Columbus hoped to make the Indians profitable and useful while at the same time, true to the tenet which allowed the conversion of infidels by force as well as by moral persuasion, saving their souls. However, noble Queen Isabelle, perhaps yielding to her spiritual guides, while myriads of her subjects perished by inquisition, put her royal foot down on Indian slavery; and until her death she followed the dictates of her noble conscience by refusing to sanction this "savagery," as she termed it.

But King Ferdinand, her successor, had no such humane or noble

feelings towards the Caribs. He decreed that once they were captured they were considered as slaves and were to be branded as such, just as we do our cattle and sheep. This was to distinguish them from other and less ferocious Indians. It was this that drove the Caribs to fury and to wage the most sanguinary battles that the Caribbee islands had ever seen until then. The Carib tribesmen fought with the impetuosity of despair, taking a solemn oath that they would never be taken alive. Once they were slain, their wives and women defended themselves with even greater frenzy. They sallied forth and struck terror, like demons, into the very strongholds of the Spanish colonists, carrying away many prisoners to be devoured at their leisure.

It was then that Ferdinand despatched a "gallant" old warrior, Juan Ponce de León, to scour these Caribbee Islands and free the seas and lands from the presence of these "devils." Landing at Guadeloupe, the Spanish were ambushed by the Caribs and all the Spanish women were captured and the men slain, so that the members of this expedition were despatched most quickly and effectively.

Gradually, however, the European settlements became strong enough to protect themselves better against these fiends, and, to prevent frequent recurrences of these outrages, the Caribs were henceforth treated like wild beasts and were killed on sight. They saw their possessions, year by year, torn from them. Their none too happy hunting grounds slowly were forced to give way to fields of cane, tobacco and sugar, all plantations of the white men they hated so desperately but futilely. One by one the islands became evacuated of their numbers, and by the end of the sixteenth century they remained as masters only of Martinique, Guadeloupe and Dominica; and even here the whites soon established their smaller settlements, at the estuaries of rivers or where the configuration of the country admitted of easy defense. In St. Kitts alone, two thousand Caribs were killed in battle, and those of them who chose to forsake the islands for safer hunting grounds sought refuge in Guiana and in certain sections of the jungle. From their stronghold in Dominica, where they had gathered in their strength and numbers, the Caribs resumed their attacks on the other islands, and ravaged and pillaged such islands as Antigua, St.

Kitts and Porto Rico, and even as late as 1640 the Dominica Caribs carried with them the wife of Governor Warner and her two children.

This kept up for many years and so hopeless had the situation become that in order to arrive at some settlement intended to establish once and for all the ownership of all the Lesser Antilles, Dominica, by the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle in the year 1748, was officially apportioned to neither the British nor the French but was set apart as a neutral island for the sole use of the Carib. A native chief was to be the master of the island, and it was to be the Indian domain upon which no white man was to encroach. This salutary situation did not last very long because, by the Peace of Versailles, the treaty was set aside and Dominica was definitely assigned to Britain in 1783. The Caribs were tacitly allowed existence so long as they kept to the forests and the mountain regions of the interior, while their claims to arable lands were entirely ignored. White settlers began to look forward to the days when privation, disease and violence would make a final end to them. Thus, centuries of warfare, followed by peaceful avocations, have almost completely exterminated this interesting race. As I stated at the beginning, there are scarcely a few Caribs remaining, of which some seem to reside in Dominica. About these I shall speak further on.

Those Caribs banished from St. Vincent crossed with the Negroes of Honduras and formed the *Caraibes Noirs*. Others are still to be found in Haiti and Domingo (although they may have been Arowaks originally); some even exist along the banks of the Orinoco and in the Guianas, where they have become known as Galibis.

The Carib language is practically extinct. Rochefort, in a work that is very rare, "*Histoire Naturelle et Morale des Isles Antilles de l'Amerique*," published in Rotterdam in 1665, gives a glossary of Carib words. This language, judging by his glossary, must have been a very harmonious one, euphonically speaking. It resembled somewhat in expression the Italian language. The Carib women had a language all their own which was entirely different from that used by the men. In order to demonstrate the euphonies of this tongue (it is curious indeed that such a fierce, warlike people had

such a dulcet language!) let me give a few examples: blood was nitta; hair, niti-boeri; mouth, nieoma; hand, noekaboe; father, baba; woman, liani. Banana was baruru. Love was known by chisentina. Ao meant: It is I. It is you, was known as Amoro. I am hungry, was known as Lamatina. Moon, in the men's language, was known as Nunu, and in the women's as Kati. Sea was known as Barana. And so forth and so on.

The Carib's outstanding traits, besides his bloodthirstiness and his cannibalism, have ever been those of obstinate bravery, able to withstand any torture, and tirelessness. They are fearless, gullible, and easily fly into ecstatic rages for utterly inscrutable reasons, yet they are innately averse to violent quarreling. They have as much national pride as any white man. They are, however, very credulous, very easily excited by any flying rumor, and deeply sensitive to and resentful of slights, insults and injustices. Their customs with respect to marriage differed very little from those in use with other slave tribes, and some of which I have covered in my last Caribbean book. In the treatment of their dead their habits were, however, more peculiar. If the deceased was of some distinction, after the funeral his bones were cleaned by the women and carefully preserved in their houses. This custom I found to be prevalent also in Guiana, where the body of the deceased was submerged in the flowing water of the nearby river until it had been picked clean by the Parai and other ferocious fish that infest the Guiana waters. The bones were then carefully dried, tinged red, and suspended from the roof of their habitation. This was the tenderest proof of attachment the Carib could show to the departed.

It is difficult now for anyone visiting the Caribs in their *Carbets*, or communal homes, to believe that they actually are the descendants of those savage warriors who spread such terror over all the West Indies and a great portion of the continent of South America. Today they live in a tranquil state, disturbed only by internecine quarrels. A century or so of peaceful avocations has metamorphosed the fierce, bloodthirsty, man-eating savage into a law-abiding and even very timid subject. No longer do we see him painted with crimson circles of *roucou* round his eyes and stripes of black and white over his body. (I attended a celebration on the occasion of

Queen Wilhelmina's birthday in Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana, last August [1936], at which a Carib chief was present, attired in borrowed high hat and black coat.) His relics have been scattered among curio collections, such as the ones I admired at Mr. Connell's, and instead of hearing his fierce, heartrending yells round the sacrificial stone, the Carib may be seen today going to the Catholic priest for confession and telling his beads with edifying fervor.

Yes, gone are the days of savagery. The more comfortable, though less romantic, shingied cabin now replaces the former dwelling of this erstwhile demon. Gone are the toebanas, or tree trunks, which made his home, the wajoepas, or foursides, on which the roof rested, and the carbets of the older type—the communal houses where the boecan, or flesh or meat, was roasted, where cassava was rasped, where manioc was prepared, and where the orgies and bacchanalians took place, at which the tapana, the yeasted water of the cassava meal, was drunk and where faggots of human bones represented the furniture, and a bleeding head hung on a post, the room decorations. The Carib of today has even lost the art of making Algodon hammocks, for which we do owe him a lasting debt of gratitude. He sleeps in a bed; he has his chairs and tables; and the stone implements, at one time used to brain his adversary, have been replaced by the hoe and the adze. And so, today, one may see the last of the tribe sitting in their carbets or lying in their hammocks, grieving and sullen, in their faces a fixed look of melancholy and sadness—fit expressions for the faces of a people destined to disappear from the earth.

The ascent to the crater of massive and awe-inspiring Mount Misery forms a most interesting jaunt by virtue of its variety of motor-trip, pony ride and even mountain climbing of the steepest kind. The easiest ascent, according to people in the know, seems to be from Belmont Estate, after permission has been duly obtained from the managers there. The motor-trip took exactly fifty-five minutes from Basseterre to the place where ponies had been ordered to wait. A pretty stiff ride, scaling a good path, brought me to a height of twelve hundred feet or so above sea level, where the tropic vegetation practically ended. At the end of the path, where

it became too rough for the equine, the rest of the trip through the forest was made on foot, an effort which was well repaid. It had rained heavily that night and the whole world, at least the world of the forest around me, seemed full of the sound of falling drops. The trees all about were still dripping; and as the sun crept higher and commenced to blaze somewhat more fiercely, the



atmosphere became almost preternaturally clear. Every leaf of fern and plant and tree-bole seemed to be studded with rain drops, and sparkled glitteringly, like a myriad diamonds, in the morning sun. Its effect was one of softness which lent a gentle beauty to the general view around me.

I emerged after a twenty-minute trek through the forest and paused to look back and to admire the view below. I was three hundred feet higher than I had been before, and beyond in the distance I could see a blue range of mountains. Onward once more I went, and another hour and a half of climbing brought me to the lip of a crater. I was now about a couple of thousand feet high.

The view here, from the base of a small pinnacle rock, was more than worth the strenuous climb. To the west, the sea spread out like a shining net to the horizon, but hills and spurs blocked the view of any other islands that were there but that could not be seen. To the east, facing the gap in the lip, was the towering peak of Mount Misery as it rose sheer from the crater below. The crater itself was almost circular, the further lip rising some four hundred feet into the air. It was a mile or so wide at the top, a quarter of a mile across, and a few hundred feet deep, with its sides very precipitous and forest-clad. The crater lake, which dries up in a prolonged drought, was a bright oval of some two hundred yards, with the left side showing the presence of a *soufrière*. A path went down to the crater bottom, but I did not make this trip as I had heard that the descent was one only to be undertaken by those having experience in mountain climbing, of which, to be candid, I have not enough. The same could be said for the crater peak. A most beautiful sight, however, was the contrast between the actual crater, which to me looked more like an uncommonly good piece of landscape gardening than a volcano, and the awesome precipice of the peak, which as it towered there over the crater floor below, naked, sheer, savage, seemed to stand guard over it like a sentinel. Above it, in serene contrast, shimmered the light blue of the sky, its perfection delicately marred by tiny white clouds that scurried across its vast surface.

The island of St. Kitts was a revelation in its overpowering grandeur which was here brought home to me. I made the descent, once more on my way, to Brimstone Hill this time. This trip was to crown the rest of our sojourn in St. Kitts. From the cloud-draped summit of Mount Misery to the beach lying thousands of feet below, with its creaming foam, the island appeared a glorious mass of green, a green of seemingly hundreds of shades and tints. As my eyes swept the countryside below I saw the vivid beauty of the cane fields, with their tender green and golden russet and sienna red. And between these two nodded the swaying palms above the surf, leaning this way and that with every vagrant breeze, showing their silhouettes so brazenly against the mountain background. They clustered high above the native huts and shaded

the homes of the planters, the while drooping like giant feather-dusters over the roof-tops of Basseterre. The title "Liamuiga," or "The Fertile," bestowed by the Caribs upon this delightful isle, is obviously no misnomer.

We had chosen a fine day for our visit to the historic fort of Brimstone Hill. This fort is a massive ruin of extensive fortifications built by the British on an isolated, precipitous, rocky mountain seven hundred and eighty feet high, and whose solid mass of loopholed and battlemented masonry completely covers every available portion of an eight-hundred-foot-high hill. Formerly well-nigh impregnable and most impressive and imposing, it is now deserted and useless and has been said to be the abode of countless monkeys, brought over from Gibraltar by the garrison as pets.

Actually, this great fortress never saw battle, for it was not built until 1793, which was ten years after France and Britain had buried the hatchet and too late to be of any value to its builders. Yet in 1782, Brimstone Hill experienced battle and a siege that was to become a black page in the history of St. Kitts. In the preceding year, in 1781 that is, England had been at war again with France, Holland and Spain at the same time that she had to contend with her rebellious American colonists. These latter, as I have shown in the previous chapters, were assisted in no small degree by Statia and St. Kitts. Some of the merchants at St. Kitts did not scruple to take a part in this contraband trade, paying heavily, however, for their actions later on. The siege of Statia, during which all the goods of British merchants became forfeit to the King of England, so incensed the inhabitants of St. Kitts against the naval and military authorities that they flatly refused to supply the labor to move the cannon up to the fort. Whether influenced by the hope of pecuniary gain or by their sympathy with the revolt of the American colonists, the people of St. Kitts steadfastly refused to be of help to the defenders of Brimstone Hill, and it was this hostility that resulted in the abandonment of the guns and ammunition to the French, whose value to the attackers of the fort was thereby greatly enhanced. It caused the English garrison of about three hundred and fifty men to be without the proper means of defending a fort whose works and defenses were already inadequate.

It was during Rodney's absence in 1781 that Statia was retaken by the French Marquis de Boillee, and it was the next year (January 11, 1782) that Count de Grasse and the Marquis arrived at St. Kitts and proceeded to lay siege to the fortress of Brimstone Hill.

England's position in these years of which I speak—1770 to 1785—was very far from being a favorable one. The American colonies, with the assistance of France, had virtually gained their independence. Louis XVI and the French had always held a grudge



ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN SAMUEL LORD HODG
AND COUNT DE GRASSE
OFF ST CHRISTOPHER
25 JAN 1782

FROM PICTURE IN ST KITTS
LIBRARY

against England, not having forgotten the Seven Years' War in which their colonies were snatched from them, and it was therefore with a great deal of gusto that France, only too eager to give England a severe thrashing, entered into the treaty with the States whereby they bound themselves to furnish aid to one another and to refrain from signing a separate peace.

In Europe, too, things had begun to take on a volcanic aspect, with threatening and restless mutterings. The Spaniards had retaken Minorca and had besieged Gibraltar, that apple of England's eye. In the West Indies France had already taken into her fond possession most of the English islands, and a powerful French fleet was awaiting the arrival of De Grasse to make a combined attack upon Jamaica. It was against such a background that the siege of Brimstone Hill was fought.

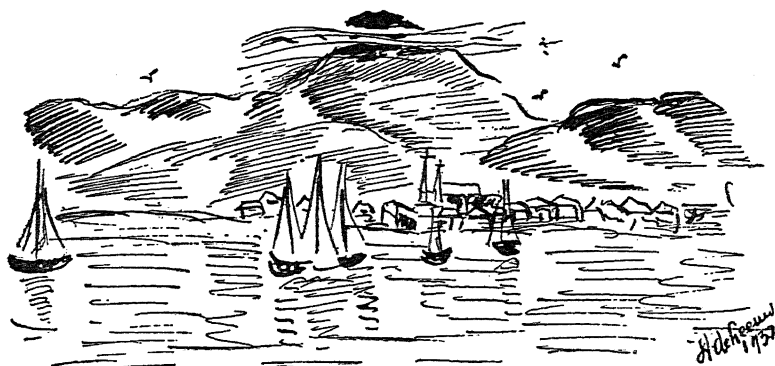
On January 11th the Marquis de Bouille made a landing and, supported by De Grasse, closely surrounded the fort. After three weeks of intense bombardment the whole of one side of the fort

was destroyed. On January 25th, a fortnight after the beginning of the siege, Sir Samuel Hood anchored in the Basseterre Roads, in pursuit of De Grasse, who had weighed anchor the evening before to engage Hood at sea. The latter's simulated attack was merely intended to draw De Grasse from the shore. But De Grasse, well aware of this maneuver, attacked the British with great fury. Being driven off, he attacked again twice the next day, but again with no success, and after this last repulse kept himself at a safe distance. Meanwhile, reassuring news had reached Hood that Shirley and Fraser were able to hold out. On January 28th General Prescott landed at Basseterre with Antigua troops and drove the enemy before him. De Bouille, upon finding Prescott so well posted, decided to lead his men back to the siege. This caused Prescott to take to sea again, as it would have been almost impossible for this small English force to raise the siege by their attack.

The English made unsuccessful attempts to throw reinforcements into the fort. Hood believed that De Grasse was breaking and that De Bouille, due to his bombardment of the forts and magazines at Basseterre, also despaired of success, and he had an idea that if Brimstone Hill could hold out ten days longer, St. Kitts could be saved for the British. A signal from the hill that the garrison was reduced and was short of ordnances caused him to do his utmost to communicate his views to General Shirley. The attempt failed. De Bouille summoned the fort to surrender. If they refused they were faced with the destruction and ruin of their plantations, so on February 13th Brigadier-General Shirley and Major-General Fraser surrendered. Their gallant defense did not go unrecognized. It was officially commended by the Articles of capitulation by which the garrison was allowed to march through the breach with all the honors of war, and the last Article, specifically, was France's tribute to the fort's brave men . . . "Out of respect to the courage and determined conduct of Generals Shirley and Fraser we consent that they shall not be considered as prisoners of war . . . the former may return to the Government of Antigua . . . and the latter may continue in the service of his country, being happy to testify this mark of particular esteem for these brave officers."

The Governor sent Hood a letter telling him of the surrender

and on the 14th (of February) the enemy fleet anchored off Nevis, in the face of which vast superiority Hood, deciding to join Rodney, slipped his cables and put out to sea. Thus the so-often-contested-for St. Kitts once more changed hands, at the cost of great damage to its plantations and a loss of close to a million dollars—although the terms of peace were favorable to the inhabitants and complimentary to the defenders. (It is said that when, on the morning after the capitulation, De Bouille saw the number and



BASSE TERRE
ST. CHRISTOPHER.

condition of the men that marched out of the fort, he exclaimed: "I ought to have taken this place a month ago!"

The dismantling of the fortress now followed, and great sums were spent on the erection of fortifications and barracks, and it was not abandoned until the Crimean War. It then became a sort of nobody's child. It became the sport of everyone who wished to steal material for building or guns for ornamentation, and even the floors suffered at the hands of inveterate treasure hunters. In recent years, the government (and especially under the able guidance of Mr. G. H. King) has endeavored to keep the ruins and roads leading to it in very good order and has paid especial attention to the old military cemetery where the tombstones bear testimony to the faithful services of many an old English regiment.

Brimstone Hill is easily reached by a good road that winds about the mountainous part of the island, and that has its starting and ending points at the Parish Church of St. George at Basseterre. One

enters the fort by a gate located four hundred and fifty feet high up on the northern side. Behind this gate and to the right of it is the Barrier Redan, a small outwork whose guns covered the road up the hill. The Magazine Bastion stands to the right as one ascends, and forms part of the longest piece of masonry on the hill, joining up with the Orillion Bastion to the south. (It was of these guns that my cicerone, showing me about the place, told me of a curious little rhyme inscribed by a facetious gunner on one gun: "Clean me good and ram we well, And I'll fire a ball from here to hell.") Continuing the ascent of the hill, one enters finally through the Gate of the Magazine Bastion which bears the date of 1793, and on whose right is located the flank that was breached in the famous siege. Climbing still higher, hugging the curve of the road, one reaches the ruins of the Resident Surgeons, the Prince of Wales Bastion, also of 1793 vintage, and the Fort Adjutant's quarters just beneath. Finally, at a height of six hundred and fifty feet, past the ruins of the Canteen and the Commissariat, the Parade Ground is reached. Here, after another bit of climbing of the seventy-foot road to the top of the Citadel, all this strenuous exercise is well rewarded. From this place of vantage is obtained the most delightful view of the island of St. Eustatius, of Saba to the west, of St. Martin, of St. Bartholomew to the north, and of Nevis to the southeast.

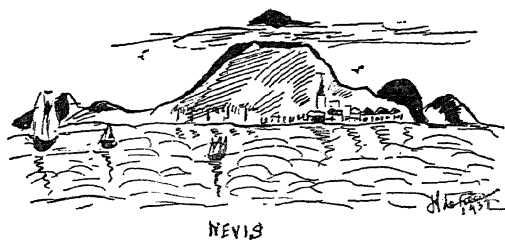
After having taken long breaths of the beauty surrounding us, we decided to have a more prosaic, but more minute, inspection. Stopping briefly at one of the casemates which was fitted with seats and tables for the convenience of tourists wishing to take refreshments there, we descended to the Parade Ground, hoping to be able to see something of the officers' quarters of which, however, little vestige remains. From there we paid a visit to the Artillery Officers' mess to have a look at the arches on the lower floors of the Regimental Officers'. Of great interest to me was the Green Tank by whose clever and intricate system the main reservoir on the hill was said to have had a capacity of one hundred thousand gallons of water.

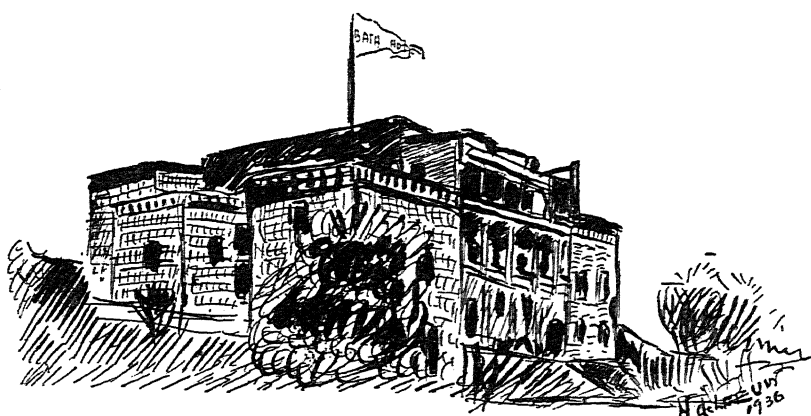
Concluding our inspection with the Ordnance Store House and the cemetery, I began to feel the need of a few minutes' respite. Sitting down on one of the stone walls, I indulged in a sort of

dolce far niente feeling, savoring in all their intensity the alluring and insidious emotions that a visit to this edifice evoked. The sweet coolness of the sea breeze played over me; shore-fringing palms swayed to and fro in a languid dance; an occasional bird would flit out of the abyss of some wave-sprayed cave and float like a ragged strip of paper on the wanton breeze. The sun was almost down to its last lingering ray and seemed to be coalesced in a purplish haze. In the midst of all this the senses became dulled to a sweet indifference to all wordly things, saving only a thought to the greatness and heroism that once were displayed here. Dreamily gazing upon the countless spangled lights of the dusk, it was as if the adventurous wonders of that other period began to rise between me and the darkening panoply of the sky. I could hear the sound again of muffled cannon thunder, the rhythmic tread of soldiers' shoes, the high, shrill cry of the bugles. The lambent air was redolent with long-gone evils and heroic struggles. I could hear again the crash of destructive broadsides of a Hood and a De Grasse, and it was as if I heard once more the fateful word of surrender uttered by the grim, courageous Fraser and Shirley.

But my reverie became broken. Its martial texture and harsh design were softened by a seemingly endless vista of undulating sweeps of cane-brakes dotted with little settlements astride the verdured mountainsides about to retire to peaceful sleep; while high above the ever-grim Mount Misery towered like a watchful giant, and below, holding it all within its embrace, lay the romantic Carib Sea.

Alexander Hamilton's Nevis





BATH HOUSE
NEVIS

DAY CAME UNHERALDED BY dawn as we left in a schooner from Basseterre for Nevis, lying about twelve miles across the bay. Light clouds drifting overhead caught the first rays of the as yet undiscernible sun, and they glowed and changed from gray and brown to a dull red. Then, almost instantaneously, they gleamed a crimson, blending into a dazzling orange and their reflections began to tinge the distant mountain tops. With the schooner well in the lee of shore, the evanescent colors faded and the sun lifted itself above the horizon. Another day had come.

With only twelve miles separating Charlestown, our next port of call, from Basseterre, St. Kitts, our crossing yet took more than two hours, owing to the light and adverse breeze.

At a distance, Nevis seemed like one huge cone rising straight up from the sea. The cone was wrapped in tiny clouds. It must have been just such a sight as this—the clouds enveloping the cone in that very way—that caused Columbus, upon striking this windfall,

to name the island "Nieves," or snow (now Nevis), when he discovered it in 1493.

Another reason for its name may have been that, at the time of its discovery, it was an active volcano whose white smoke, as it rose from the summit, must have given the appearance of a snowcap. If we are to believe all that we read in older documents, Nevis must have been called "Mevis," or "Meves," while it was also referred to as "Dulcinea." Whatever its name, I thought, as the boat pointed to the harbor, it made a most inviting impression—what with its red-roofed houses and its groves of palms. It seemed to be another isle of enchantment. Nevis is only a tiny dot on the map. Its area is but fifty square miles, and it has but sixteen thousand acres of arable land that at one time in its history supported a population of some thirty thousand. Geographically, it is nothing more than an appendix of St. Kitts. Its valuable, fertile land that was once covered with rich sugar plantations comprises today but a small percentage of the total area, which is a mountainous region.

Nevis was used by navigators, as a landfall, long before the year 1628, when its pages of history began. A certain Captain John Smith, no stranger to us in America, wrote, in 1629: "In this isle of Mevis, more than twenty years agoe, I have remained a good time together, to wod, and water and refresh my men." It is quite possible that these men at some places must have encountered the poisonous "Manchineal" trees, which, like those on the island of Curaçao, still exist and grow in great profusion along the banks of the stream used for bathing. The "scalding by dew from the trees," described by the same Smith, must have been caused by rain or dew dripping from the "Manchineal," a danger only too well known today. And Smith wrote further: "Here we found also a great poole wherein bathing themselves, they found much ease . . . they were well cured in two or three days."

This Captain John Smith is the same who in 1614 executed a map of what he termed his discovery and description of the New England coast—to which I may add, purely as my own observation, that the said John Smith was either a good discover or a good prevaricator, as it is possible that he used other people's maps, made years before him. But to come back to Nevis, what we know for a certainty about this little speck of a place is that Nevis

was included in the grant to the Earl of Carlisle in 1627 and that Captain Thomas Warner settled here the following year.

The light of extensive study has given rise to the belief that Carib Indians have lived here, too, not only because of many relics that have been found but also because of the report of Captain John Smith in which he referred to "fear of attack by savages," who could not have been any other but the war-like Caribs.

Though Nevis is only a mere speck on the map, it has nevertheless also done its bit toward the making of a West Indian domain for Britain. A further perusal of its history pages reveals that a certain Thomas Littleton must have been the actual founder of the colony, having been sent there by the Earl of Carlisle, although upon arrival he found there a settlement which apparently had come from St. Kitts. A Spanish fleet, under Don Frederic de Toledo, plundered both Nevis and its neighbor, St. Kitts. In the seventeenth century Nevis seems to have fared better than her neighbor, whose progress was impeded by interior strife and warfare, because at that time Nevis was enjoying great days of prosperity.

Fourteen years after its occupation by the English, on April 30, 1680, to be exact, the town of Jamestown, capital of Nevis in those days and located on the western coast, was destroyed by a tidal wave and entirely submerged. Similar evil fortune kept on besetting the little island for some time, as revealed by the fact that in 1707, after the French, who had attacked and laid bare a portion of St. Kitts and Nevis, had deserted the island, one of the worst hurricanes ever recorded added to Nevis' cup of bitter sorrows. That, however, was not enough to obfuscate the spirit of the earlier colonists, and the stubbornly persevering British swarmed here again; but, alas, the gods were still against them. Some twenty-seven years later, the island was visited by another catastrophe, another atmospheric phenomenon, more disastrous to the island than the calamities of previous years. It was a blight that, according to the records, must have been a series of poisonous exhalations originating in the central cone of the volcano, and that destroyed all vegetation and reduced the once-so-fertile spot to a barren desert. This caused an exodus of its inhabitants who fled to the

North American colonies, and in whose upbuilding they also had a small share.

And then there were the French. For some unknown reason, the French just had to poke their noses into this unlucky spot about the same time as the siege of Brimstone Hill. Their nose-poking was of small avail, however, as Nevis was restored to Britain by the Treaty of Versailles, in January, 1783.

In the brief chronicle of its existence, another blot that marred its pages was the discovery of a conspiracy, in the year 1761, among the Negro slaves who had intended to massacre all the whites.

A more cheerful note in its otherwise sordid pages was the visit of Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson to its shores, causing quite a flutter not only among its inhabitants but more especially in the heart of the comely Widow Nisbet.

Once more, in 1805, the audacious French attacked and plundered the place; and when in conclusion I add the years 1836 and 1873, in which Charlestown was almost completely demolished by fires, I have reason to believe that I have covered the unfortunate history of that tiny island.

As soon as the schooner had landed us at the birth-place of Alexander Hamilton, the place at once became of particular interest not only to myself but to my American fellow-passengers. We cast a hasty look around and inquired where his birthplace might be. Only some ruins near the shore of the bay were pointed out to us as the possible remains of the place, although no one seemed able to vouch for its being so. We regretted that it had not been found possible to designate, by some mark or sign, actually where Hamilton had been born. We thought it strange that some of our patriotic societies or some well-to-do patriotic American had not found it worth while to take the initiative or to have started a movement to erect there some sort of shrine or tablet for posterity.

Charlestown impressed me, as it has impressed many others before me, as a place of departed glory, its ruins of once-flourishing days being its doubtful feature of interest. It possesses, however, a good road, enabling one to make a trip by a circuitous route to the northern, and most picturesque, portion of the island.

Remembering that Nevis once had been a favorite watering place and health resort for the *beau monde*, I paid a visit to the Bath House, known for its thermal baths, whose efficacious and healing properties, so I was told, were on a par with some of the best natural springs in Europe. It was to these baths that Nevis once owed her reputation as the fashion spot of the West Indies. That these baths were already known to the earliest voyagers is evidenced by old records, from which we cull the information that many of our first settlers, bound for Virginia, in 1607, stopped at Nevis to "take the cure."

Nevis also has another claim upon our interest; for it was at Nevis, as I mentioned briefly above, that Horatio Nelson, Britain's idol, was ensnared by the charming widow, Frances Herbert Nisbet, or Fanny Nisbet, as she was better known. Cupid won, and they were married at the old Fig-Tree Church in 1787. Without in any way detracting from his greatness, after he became a famous admiral, the scandal mongers revealed that Nelson soon forgot his faithful wife, to be lured away by the attractions of Lady Hamilton. And even if he did, he would not be the first sailorman who liked his variety.

In making the trip to the Fig-Tree Church, I took the route around the island, seeing many intriguing spots. After leaving Charlestown, I continued east to Gingerland, and then by northern route skirted the Windward Coast back to where I had started, by way of the western or Leeward Route. This route was best for the horses, although going around the other way, which is easiest on foot, affords a rare sight of clusters of lofty islets and rocks that excite the imagination not only of the staunchest adventurer but of even the most blasé traveler. This latter route begins at the Bath House Hotel, and, passing the sulphur baths, once the town is left behind, comes to a cocoanut plantation (cocoanut planting having become an industry of recent years). At this point, one commands a fine view of St. Kitts, with Mount Misery looking a cloud-wrapped peak in the distance.

Continuing on my way, passing sugar works and an old Quaker cemetery, I came to St. Thomas Church, the oldest church on the island. In this churchyard the best families of Nevis have been laid to rest. I did not tarry long here, although many of the tomb-

stones might have told an interesting tale pertaining to the island's illustrious history. From this point, there was a quickly changing character of terrain and a grand view of the Narrows out to the Atlantic, and towards the eastern end of the Narrows I was able to discern the tiny speck called Booby Island, which is merely a rock that derives its name from its sole inhabitants, the boobies, or pelicans. The coloring of the whole was brilliant in the extreme, with a clear bright blue sky and scenery in all shades of green flecked here and there with burning hues of tropic flowers.

Having perambulated in this manner for quite a while, I came to an historic well or spring where Nelson is said to have watered his ships and which consequently has been named Nelson Spring. Then followed a number of old estates, alternating again with church, tombstone, and whatnot, until the road began to climb again through more hilly terrain where, well hidden in the foothills was Jeffery Estate. The last owner of this place was the Governor of Nevis, who was ruined by the economic upheaval that followed the abolition of slavery, and who emigrated to the United States. This former Governor Jeffery later became an American citizen—and it is interesting to note that his grandson was among those in the first contingent of the American Army who went to France in 1917, in the World War, where he served as a chaplain.

I strolled on through little villages, among which was Brick Kiln village and a settlement of colored people in the eastern part of the island, then downward again, until I came to Fig-Tree village, with St. John's Church there, which was the parish church of Mrs. Nisbet, better known as Lady Nelson. With early afternoon shadows scampering across the stones, I was glad to sit down for some moments, in quiet repose in this very charming place. A register in the vestry of this church contains the record of Nelson's marriage to his Fanny, the widow Frances Herbert Nisbet, on March 11, 1787. A monument has been erected by Lady Nelson, in memory of her parents. The churchyard itself was literally studded with a mass of flowering shrubs and weeds that unfortunately hid many of the tale-telling tombstones.

On the old site where, in a house called "Montpelier," the Widow Fanny once lived, and where she and the Admiral were married, nothing but the original gate posts remain. A modern

house has taken the place of "Montpelier." Lest I forget it, and in order to make this record complete, it should be added that the blushing and comely bride was given away in marriage by Nelson's friend, Prince Henry of Great Britain, who was there on a cruising mission.

The slopes of Mount Nevis revealed some of the most perfect views imaginable, not only of the Caribbean Sea, but also of the numberless islands near by set like jewels in the Caribbean girdle, and whose summits rise, one after another, out of the ocean. Their picturesque outlines and innumerable channels, bays, and promontories covered with rich tropical growths, their lovely beaches and white rolling surf presented a vista of extraordinary beauty and magnificence. It was from this point of eminence that I beheld Barbuda, a game preserve, and the property of the Codrington family of historic fame; Redonda, a lonely soul—merely a rock, possessing phosphate deposits; St. Eustatius, that rose into view at various points in the island; enigmatic Saba, and St. Kitts.

Nevis itself seemed to be actually one large mountain, with its ten thousand acres of arable lands spreading out from the coast to the mountain slopes. Among its main industries, at one time, were the production of sugar cane and cotton. During times when prices made these industries profitable, its numerous small estates were operated under the old *Muscovado* System, by the aid of windmills and small steam engines. Many of these have been abandoned, now, giving way to Sea Island cotton, which has become the island's bread-and-butter industry. This may be the reason why Nevis' population has dwindled to such a small number. For, in the days of the highly specialized sugar industry, a large staff became necessary; and, when sugar was no longer king, the appreciable European staffs that had been engaged in ownership and administration of the plantations and factories were no longer needed, and the exodus to other places began. The actual work in the fields, in sugar mill or cotton gin, as well as the domestic work, was done by colored labor, descendants of slaves. These slaves were imported during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and received their freedom at a time when slavery was abolished in the British West Indies, by proclamation of Queen Victoria, on August 1, 1838.

A thing that always impressed me, in these British West Indian Islands, is the comparatively large society of mixed European and African descent. They are the leftovers from buccaneering days, or the result of the press gangs recruited by the navy in the eighteenth century, as well as of the deportations of many whites from England, Scotland and Ireland for political or criminal reasons. Among the factors that led to these miscegenations were, for instance, the comparatively small influx of white women from Europe, and the advent of slavery, which carried absolute laxity of morals in its wake. Here, as elsewhere, the large number of mulattos, quadroons, and octoroons is astounding, but it is a fact that their outstanding characteristic is their patriotic tendency—first for their place of abode, and second for the Empire and the Crown. I presume that what has added to this condition is the absolute political, economic and legal equality for all races that obtains here. Do not be misled, however, by this, for there exist in no small measure a racial differentiation and race consciousness. This occurs particularly in these people's social life, in which lines are closely drawn and show various stages of distinction—not unlike conditions in our own American states, where such a large colored and conglomerate segment exists. But it will always be found that women are worse than men in drawing the color line, and it is they who do most of the "cutting." In this respect, the British West Indian differs so much from the French and Dutch Islanders, since among the latter peoples racial equality is carried much further and the color line is less drawn. Perhaps the reason for this difference can be easily explained. Under French management the natives assimilate very quickly and very soon feel and act like Frenchmen themselves. This is much more difficult under British rule by virtue of the Englishman's superior race attitude; the problem then becomes actually a social one. It has been proved over and over again, in India and in other British possessions, that the Briton will feel quite on par when meeting the native—either mulatto or Eurasian—in business, but it is an entirely different matter when it comes to meeting him in his home. So that, with the British moral views diverging from those of the French, it is easy to see why a distinct social barrier exists. And yet I would be inclined to say that the British have the edge on the French

in the handling of native and colored races. However, once these people emerge from their lowly state, as a result of the new order of things, and begin to ascend higher rungs of the ladder of civilization, the trouble for the British begins; and it is then that the French leave the British far behind.

It is rather interesting, at this point, to draw a parallel with the Dutch, who also have millions of various native people under their charge. During my stay in the East Indies, I came to the conclusion that the Dutch Colonial Government, in its relationship with these native peoples under their charge (there are over fifty-five millions of every color, creed and nationality) have assumed quite an interestingly liberal and philosophic attitude in the handling of the color line that almost parallels the wise attitude of the French on that point. The law of the Dutch—East and West Indies—prescribes that the offsprings of all mixed marriages are considered white. The result is that they are given the political status of Europeans, and they may, if they so wish, move in white society, where they are received ostensibly. The British, however, make no such concession.

There are many additional moral aspects to this important question. It is not easy to state now which policy is the wiser and better one for all. Time alone—that qualified judge—can tell.

Montserrat

THE WEST INDIAN ERIN



LIME TRANSPORT
MONTSEERRAT



WHEN AN AMERICAN EX-POLICE officer on board mentioned the colored Irish, he created a near riot. I had heard of High Irish, Low Irish, Wild Irish, Scholarly Irish, Fighting Irish, Irish of the North and Irish of the South but colored Irish was certainly a new one on me. It was with a more-than-passing curiosity, therefore, that I anticipated this visit to the Erin of the West Indies.

Daybreak witnessed our arrival at the Plymouth roadstead of the Montpelier of the West, whose highest peak, La Soufrière (at the southern end), towered three thousand feet above the emerald sea. Located twenty-six miles southwest of Antigua and forty miles northeast of Guadeloupe, Montserrat, together with Dominica, St. Kitts, Nevis and Antigua, comprises a dependency of the Leeward Islands group, with its governor located in Saint John, at Antigua.

I must confess that the beauty that awaited me was well worth the two days' visit, since the natural charm of Montserrat compared favorably with certain South Sea regions that I know. Its windward side bold and rugged and covered with verdure and forests, and its leeward side sloping gently towards the sea, re-

vealed at once to the naked eye many plantations of lime and cocoa groves.

When Columbus set eyes upon this delightful spot on Sunday, November 10, 1493, he plunged at once deep into his indispensable almanac which always lent him great aid in the selecting of names. Finding nothing in the way of a Saint to synchronize with his discovery date, he delved once more into his geographical cellar and discovered, to his great relief, that in its bold, scabrous, steep shores and jagged heights, the isle bore a great semblance to Montserrat, a mountain in Spain—the site of an old Catalonian Monastery, where Ignatius Loyola fostered “The Society of Jesus.” Hence the island appropriately was named Montserrat.

The island itself, aside from its fame for limes and Irish darkies (about whom I shall have more to say in later pages), boasts, as I have already said, of La Soufrière, a semi-active crater that emits an occasional puff of sulphurous vapors, with Centre Hill rising a couple of thousand feet in the south; and Silver Hill in the north towering a mere one thousand feet above the sea. Two-thirds of its area is taken up by volcanic mountains, completing its rugged picture.

Plymouth, its capital, with its ruins and crumbling walls of once-imposing buildings and mansions, and profusely covered with creepers and vines in a riot of colors, has seen better days.

It was due to the enterprising spirit of some thrifty Quakers, back in the 1840's, that the lime industry took its rise. That the industry has become firmly established becomes evident soon enough as one travels through the island and sees the vast groves of lime trees that supply the well-known Montserrat limejuice and citric acid to the world, and that here reveal themselves in all their extravagance.

Soufrière's eruption of 1899 practically destroyed the lime groves. This had its advantages, too, since the industry was rehabilitated with a rejuvenated propagation of better fruit brought from Dominica. The citron tree, which gives the Montserrat juice, does not occur very far north of the Azores, and is a thorny evergreen bearing dark green leaves and small white blossoms. The fruit, when ripe, is cut and the essential oil is expressed from the rind by turning the fruit, under firm pressure from the hand, onto

blunt spikes, set in copper receptacles. The fruit is once more passed through rollers in the mills, with the juice running off into large casks, trusses or barrels, a little sulphuric acid being added in order to prevent deterioration. One barrel, or cask, of limes will yield from seven to eight gallons of juice. The casks are then sealed and shipped to refineries in England, where the product provides a base for citric acid and other preparations.

When the fruit is in bloom, the whole countryside is redolent with the fragrance of its blossoms. A crop of limes may be gathered all throughout the year, although harvest time is usually from July to September, when one may witness the gay assiduity of life in the limeyards.

Lime and lime juice serve many uses in the tropics, especially for therapeutic and medicinal purposes. It is curious to relate that lime, lemon, or "lemmetje," as this fruit is called by the Guiana bushmen, is used in the preparation of a love-philter by the Bush Negroes and, I was informed, was highly efficacious. This parallels the situation in Sumatra, where the Batak tribe have identical artifices—making use of a "djerook," as they call these limes. Such measures were especially employed, or resorted to, when they failed otherwise to win the man or the woman they loved. The most frequently used potion was the juice of a very tiny lemon, with another more recondite brew added—terribly efficient but, in consequence, beyond the financial reach of the ordinary native. Anyone owning it had but to put a drop or two on the clothes of the adored one to set aflame with passion the object of his desire, but the more effective method was to have the person drink it. No such potion, however, seemed to be entirely satisfactory unless the consequent passion incantation was simultaneously employed.

With pathos, I must here state that I had one such similar potion offered me by a Bush Negro in Guiana . . . for scientific, I hasten to add, not for amorous purposes; and with greater pathos, I must also state that I have to take the word of the bushmen as to its efficaciousness. I couldn't swear that these lime-juice potions would do it.

On the positive side, many of the colored folks of the West Indies, and their brethren in the Bush, believe almost blindly in the power of lime and its ability to accomplish certain ends. When

the supposed remedy fails, they cannot be made to see that there exists no earthly connection between what they tried to accomplish and what they actually want; and when the failure occurs, obiah, or witchcraft, is blamed.

Personally, I have found, in the many years that I have traveled in tropic lands, that the juice of the lime does have a purifying or antiseptic effect, and I have used it extensively as a prophylactic. For example, adding a few drops of lime or lemon juice to my drinking water I always have found very beneficial—especially when being bothered by “tummy ache.”

Getting back for a moment to Montserrat: to the best of my knowledge the island originally was settled by what history has referred to as the Wild Irish, and it became a British colony in 1632. This island was, at the time, inhabited by aboriginal Indians whom the white colonists unrelentingly and speedily despatched to their doom. To enlarge upon the cruelties that were practiced “in the name of humanity” and “for the propagation of the faith” would be futile, but I cannot resist putting down a tale told of a band of sailors—I believe they were British—who were ambushed by the Carib Indians, and, as could be expected, were shown little quarter and speedily put to their end. One of them, however, legend tells us, a very handsome “bloke,” was saved by a young Carib girl, Yarico, who, keeping her affinity well hidden in a cave, nourished and attended him for months. She, being human like the rest of us mortals, fell in love with this white man. When at last the coast was clear for him to make his escape, she guided him to the beach, where a small boat was on hand that would take him to safety. It was then that the culprit possessed himself of the maiden, made her a prisoner, and later sold her as a slave. *There* was gratitude!

But back to history again: The next milestone in Montserrat's career witnessed the advent of the slaves, followed by what were termed Wild Irish, who had been banished by Oliver Cromwell to their bondage at Montserrat and Antigua. Many came of their own free will, too, in order to escape his fury and tyranny. Now, some of my readers may “get their Irish up” upon learning of their colored Irish compatriots; but rest assured, why there should

have been colored Irish can be easily explained—for which I may have to turn back the pages of time.

With the origin of slavery lost in the far reaches of history, I shall not even attempt to go so far back but shall begin, instead, with the fifteenth century, as it was in that period that slavery began to make its horrible presence felt in the West Indies. In that century, when the Portuguese acquired African possessions, they had already had much colored blood in their veins. At first, the colored blood had come to Portugal in dribbles, and later it actually had become a flood. Some whites and many of these Iberian-Gothic-Arabian-Negro offsprings were virtually among the first ones to colonize South America and the West Indies; and in the course of time the French, the British, the Dutch and many other nations fetched thousands of Negroes from all parts of Africa—with whom, and with whose offsprings, the white masters commingled and cohabited. It is therefore easy to see why one finds in the Dutch, the French, the British and the former Spanish islands all kinds of admixed peoples who undoubtedly, in much hybridized form, had inherited some of the good qualities and many of the imperfections of their masters. Although it should be said here that many of the Negroes—at least of some of the many African tribes—at the time when they were sold by their native princes were already living in depraved conditions, even worse than in their new land. Many, even there, actually were a degraded people—nothing more than human fodder—and treated worse than cattle. Many of these, who had also been slaves in Darkest Africa, once brought to the West Indies and South America again became slaves, so that to them slavery was nothing new.

As slavery increased, so did the fear-inspired slave tenets and the often vile codes; so that with earlier colonial governments being what they were—often of low caliber—and ruling by crudely constructed laws and ordinances, it is easy to see now why adulteration was condoned, and that to procreate an illegitimate child was considered no sin. As long as slavery lasted, the mouthpiece (an iron plate on the tongue to prevent the slave's outcry), the Negro boots (the iron rings around the legs) and the cat-o'-nine-tails (the whip of nine leather belts studded with nails)

were the white planter's barbaric *impedimenta* with which these worthies enforced their bidding. They were such memories that remained imbedded in the minds of the slaves for many, many years.

The white planters and others (by which I do not mean to infer only the Wild Irish, but many of the earlier forefathers of the present Dutch, Spanish, French and British) were as guilty as Judas of all sorts of derelictions and often led a sinful life. It is easy to understand why this was so, since the caliber of the earlier colonists was not always of a high order. For instance, this parallels, almost, the earlier Dutch who before 1648 came to these parts and were often of the lowest strata of Holland society. Similarly, it was with the other nationals. And since they had no sympathy—at least in those days of which I write—with social reforms, they were never overanxious to lessen the burdens of these oppressed and most unfortunate people. The whites were, after all, more concerned with their own personal welfare and with their greed; hence it may be safely said that, in common with the treatment accorded our own slaves in the South, life handed these colored people the hot end of the poker.

The white master was attracted by the luscious flesh of these young and well-built colored women and girls. (Influx of white women, except in Tortuga, where they were imported from France for the benefit of the buccaneers, was very small in those days, and men then, as now, had their weak moments: A colored girl was often like the proverbial welcome port in a storm.) Being a slave, and knowing that her remonstrances would bring naught save torture or death, she thought it a way out, therefore, and quite natural to submit to her master's lust. There was, however, a selfish motive, too. She often considered it an honor to be with child which she hoped would be of a lighter color than herself or which even might be almost white.

The foregoing, however briefly here related, may actually have been the real foundation on which this large miscegenated element—the social phenomena of those cockeyed times—has been created. A great majority of the peoples in the West Indies and South America are, therefore, hybrid in origin; they are actually cross-bred—sprung up through miscegenation between the white and

often primitive peoples, and producing such admixtures as half-breeds, mulattos, quadroons, quintroons, octoroons, and fustees, etc. There may also have been a fusion of whites and Indians, which produces the mestee or mestizos; and also the fusion of colored people and Indians, which, in turn, produced the zambos. And whether the good or the bad qualities of the whites were transmitted to their colored offsprings, or whether the offsprings were inferior or superior to their parents, I shall not touch upon, either, since that subject belongs in another category not coverable in this volume.

One thing more I should like to get off my mind, and it is this: I cannot see why the white need necessarily be considered so much superior to the colored man. Neither could one expect a colored people that has been so cruelly treated and held in abject slavery and subjugation and then suddenly enfranchised by the mere stroke of a pen to acquire all the good traits and character of its white spoilers. It has taken us more than two thousand years to be what we are—and we whites are far from perfect—so that we can hardly expect the colored people to have made the same strides in less than one hundred and ten years. I believe that these people, who can be said to be just in the spring tide of life, have done fairly well, considering the circumstances.

Race and color differ in many respects, in physical and mental characteristics: Every race, whether black or white, yellow or red, or whether of Christian, Hebrew, Mahometan, Confucian, or Buddhist creed, has added something—either in good or in bad qualities—that has been made use of in civilized society. We also know that there are uncounted millions of people among us, and purported so-called civilized people, whose mental equipment or machinery is often less advanced, to say the most, than that of a shrimp, and who are the very ones that do most of the “discriminating.”

I am not one who claims to be a follower of Count Gobineau, to whom we are indebted (?) for the saying, among others, “*nous ne descendons pas du singe, mais nous y allons*”—“we don’t descend from the apes, but we are going there,” nor of Morton—who maintains that racial intermixture has disastrous consequences; neither am I an adherent to the thought that amalgamation between races

may be called a blessing in disguise. What I do believe, however, is that inter-blending, when it takes place under circumstances that are sound and healthy, is often productive of a sort of superior growth. Apropos of this, I believe, therefore, that many of the miscegenated offsprings in the West Indies must have been far superior to the original white stock whence they sprang. It is true that it is difficult, indeed, for mixed progeny to demonstrate its full worth, although in Santo Domingo and the Republic of Haiti we have proof that it has worked—because Haitian and Dominican people have shown their full worth, culturally, and have exploded the age-old theory that admixtures were often outcasts of society. Most of the men in Haiti and Santo Domingo who have achieved prominence have been of mixed blood. In fine, mixed races have been found a most indispensable wedge between white and black. They form a homogeneous whole whose offsprings, by intermarrying again, often produce superior types. That the mulatto, by marriage, endeavors to bring his or her offspring back again to white, or as close to white as possible, is easy to understand because of his inherent wish to save his progeny much of the oppression and prejudice that he himself has, in many instances, had to endure. The minds of these people have been found as subtle, and their reasoning as refined, as our own. As a matter of fact, as with the cultured Haitian, their tone and deportment are even higher.

In times to come, I have reason to believe that the white race may disappear from the islands and the offsprings of the mixed races will predominate. This confirms the belief expressed in my book, "Crossroads of the Java Sea," that the Eurasian question of crossbreeding of races is one of such importance that the authorities cannot fail to take cognizance of it.

And now let us go back again to Montserrat and the colored Irish: I may as well begin with the banished Irish rebel colonists, some of whom found the island of Montserrat much to their liking. As they set foot on these Montserrat shores, there was at once bounce in their step, and they swung their much-knotted shillalahs and tilted their round-head conical hats. Like true sons of Erin, they actually had an unquenchable desire for a good scrap, especially the Galway Irish. Although for them the center of

gravity had begun to shift from Cromwellian warfare to colonial business, they were truly happy with this whirligig of time as they pranced down Montserrat's hilly and dusty roadways, as further evidence of their joy, they would occasionally break forth in a real Irish reel, clay pipe and all. All this was occasioned by a tug at the heartstrings—from which no true son of Killarney, Cork, Tipperary, or Kilkenny can escape. Hence, for hours they exuberantly let loose their broadsides of wit and eloquent Irish-brogued phrases, whose melodious rhapsodies resounded for many miles around.

There was real reason for these Slaintes and Gaelic exultations. They undoubtedly felt as did our Pilgrim or Separatist Fathers, when they landed at Provincetown Harbor, of this blessed land.

As one of the scholars among the earlier Irish settlers—a lowly but incomparable bard, or schoolmaster of distinction—so graphically wrote in lucid prose to those dear to him in the Ireland he had just left behind: “. . . a true gift of the Laird, this emerald isle, I cannot help being reminded by this lovely spot with rich dales and valleys, its brooks and rippling streams and evergreen foliage, that sadly remind me of heavenly Killarney, the land of our fathers I have just left.”

At one time there must have been more than twenty-five hundred families of Irish or Irish extraction in the island. And true to the nostalgic spirit for their green Erin which even to this day characterizes all people of Irish descent, these earlier Irish settlers saw to it that their trademark was left indelibly impressed for posterity at Montserrat. This showed itself not only in the surnames of the people, but also by the continued use of Irish idioms, and such place names as Kerry, Kinsale and Harriss, Kilkenny, Tipperary and Cork, and even Blarney. But, as brought out in the preceding pages, when I summarized a monstrous system of immense human tragedy and folly that festered in all places that had kept colored men in bondage, Irish settlers' indiscretions too produced a crop of Irish colored offsprings—for which, of course, the Irish of today need feel no shame at all—for the very plausible reason that they had nothing to do with these earlier indiscretions.

Even the physical characteristics prevail, so that one may meet a red-headed, freckle-faced colored person with a twinkle in his

oft'-blue eye, on the Montserrat roads, who, in that delightfully free-and-easy Irish manner might be heard chanting silver-toned ballads in Keats' "Music's Golden Tongue," or again, one might be hailed by a mulatto—a Mulcahy—who might be tossing off a few Slaintes at Erin in good old Donegan jargon in which might lurk much flavor of the brogue; and a brogue so thick that, figuratively, one could hardly cut it even with a Toledo blade.

It is a fact that everywhere on the island the Irish brogue is prevalent upon the people's tongues; and what is more, one is often startled by their names, so that pitch-black colored persons sport such delightful and musical names as: Mulcahy and McCormick; O'Hara and O'Malley, O'Grady, O'Toole, O'Reilly and O'Farrell, O'Flannagan and Finnegan; O'Dea and O'Shea, O'Brien and O'Donahue; and Duffy, Murphy, Kelly and Flynn; Reilly, Fitzpatrick, Foley and Flaherty; besides Callahan and Shanahan, O'Hollahan and Monahan, O'Boyle and O'Sullivan, O'Keefe and O'Donovan, and a host of others too numerous to cover here. (It may be observed at a mere glance that the place was indeed redundant of the fair shamrock.)

All these might be speaking the Irish patois that they learned from the earlier settlers, or they might be chiming their dulcet Irish diatessarons, with a merry Kerry twinkle in their eye, and bristling with wit and blarney, while panegyricizing their green Erin, the isle they have never seen.

In concluding this short Irish interlude, I am reminded of an anecdote that seems to have graced the pages of many a travel book. It refers to an Irishman fresh from Erin, who, many years ago, had come to Montserrat to make his home. What particular feature or attraction there may have been about his ruddy countenance that appealed so irresistibly, I do not know. Perhaps it was the humming of a Roscommon or the cutting of the air with his shillalah; whatever it was, he was stopped on the road and addressed by a colored man in his own Gaelic dialect, his speech larded with the customary blarney and sporting a delightful brogue. Big-hearted Pat at once thought this fellow a son of Erin, so that he queried, "Faith, my good man, what gift of the God may ye be and how long have ye been here?" "One year," was the laconic reply. So that the true son of green Erin, his twinkling

eyes almost popping out of his round face, exclaimed, "By the ghost of St. Patrick, glory be to God, if you can turn so black and so ugly in a year, I had better take to my legs and return whence I came." And friend Pat swung around on his heel and betook himself back to his ship, taking an oath never to set foot in Montserrat again.

And to those of you who might doubt the veracity of this incident and take the little tale *cum grano salis* (with a grain of salt), let me say: *valeat quantum potest* (let it be valued at what it may be worth). Because in this instance at least, I believe myself to be on a par with Horace, who, in one of his Odes said, "*integer vitæ scelerisque purus*" ("blameless in life and pure of crime!").

Guadeloupe

“A FLAIR OF PARIS”



GUADELOUPE
RAVINGRESSES



BASSE TERRE
GUADELOUPE

IN THE LAST CHAPTER I HAVE dwelt somewhat at length on the subject of color, and particularly that of inbreeding. An interesting light is shed on this subject in the very readable "Memoirs" of Père Labat, who, in his long sojourn in the West Indies, made Guadeloupe his home. Père Labat, a member of the Jacobin Monastery or Dominican Friars of Paris, left Paris in August of the year 1693 for the French West Indian Islands, and while becoming of incalculable value to his Church, also had the good thought to leave for posterity a remarkable and valuable picture of the times and life in these West Indian Islands.

In the latter decades of the seventeenth century, the Superiors of the order, then in charge of the Dominican Mission, had at various times asked their co-brethren in France to induce other Fraters to come to the West Indies. They needed new blood, since an epidemic had greatly depleted their ranks.

Père Labat was one of the recipients of these urgent appeals.

Being young, then only thirty years old—still a good age to venture forth to the tropics—and of an adventurous nature, he quickly decided to answer the call. He therefore set sail, accompanied by a certain Guillaume Massonier, another but less conspicuous member of his order.

It should be said that Père Labat, though down with fever, escaped the rest of the ailments; hence he did not share Dr. Samuel Johnson's opinion that "a sea voyage was a veritable hell." He did not get *mal de mer*. Perhaps he had made a special study of the log books of voyagers, because curiously enough—at least for those times—he had taken along a large stock of fresh vegetables and a great many pots with plants and small fruit-bearing trees, as well. So that throughout the voyage across to the New World, our Père was to have his fresh greens, and genial and unselfish soul that he was, balancing self-indulgence with great prudence, he was able to supply all those of the sailors who showed signs of intestinal ailments.

Now, as the records have shown, Père Labat must have been a great priest but also a man of the world. He was a juvenescent man, broadminded, witty, alert, extremely lovable, and a sort of Jack-of-all-trades. He also understood a great deal about the handling of a ship, which may have been born out of his knowledge of mathematics and geometry. In his spare moments, this diamond-in-the-rough loved to play chess, was a student of philosophy, had read numberless books in Latin and Greek, was a great lover of music, was skilled also at the building trades, and had the reputation of being an engineer besides. All these accomplishments were displayed during his life in the islands, his manifold capabilities aiding him and the colonists a great deal. Later on, during his stay, his particular hobby became the art of healing the sick. It did not take him long to pry into the strange exorcisms and conjuring of the witch-doctors and native medicine men. It was through this Frater, I believe, that we received our first real insight into the treatment of snake bite, while he, as a naturalist, left for posterity a pretty complete description about the uses of native herbs and plants. In fine, as you can see, Père Labat was more than a priest. The "Memoirs" he left are written with that remarkable foresight that seemingly characterized all his dealings,

and, due to their delightfully written prose, are most lively reading. It is in these pages that the good Frater presents some interesting travel description of the islands of Martinique, Marie Galante and Guadeloupe, France's colonies in the West Indies.

Guadeloupe (actually comprising two islands, Basse-Terre and Grande-Terre) is the largest and most northerly of the three relatively large islands which constitute the central links of the great Caribbean girdle, with Guadeloupe marking the convergence of this great igneous range. By a strange freak of nomenclature, the larger island, replete with mountain peaks (including a *soufrière* of forty-nine hundred feet in height), rivers and lofty uplands, bears the name of Basse-Terre, or Low Land; while the one that is actually low-lying and that has its level and fertile acres, and is also smaller in size, is called Grande-Terre, or Large Land. They are separated by the narrow Rivière Sale. The capital of the island is Basse-Terre, located on the southwest coast, while upon its uplands we find St. Claude, a mountainous health resort, Camp Jacob, and the residency of the governor. On the island's east coast is Le Moule, a sugar center and Porte-d'Enfer, that is situated in its southeastern promontory. The chief commercial center and its port is Pointe-à-Pitre, in the low-leveled Grande-Terre, nestled on the shore of an inlet of the Bay of Cul de Sac. This town, strangely enough, is surrounded by a mangrove swamp. It was settled in 1654 by a Dutchman named Pieters, from who it took its name, Pitre, and it would seem that he could have selected a better, less swampy spot. Unless, of course, this Dutchman felt at home in this aqueous land, which reminded him, perhaps, of some of the swamps in his native land. At the southern, mountainous extremity of Basse-Terre rises La Soufrière, a volcano that, attaining a height of almost five thousand feet, emits a thick sulphurous vapor. It has behaved very well, however, having lain practically dormant since 1843, when it erupted and laid waste several towns.

The approach to Guadeloupe is made usually very early in the morning. One comes to Basse-Terre after coasting for hours the rugged, yet verdured headlands, whose foothills extend far back to the central volcanic range, with Soufrière rearing its puffing cone high above it all.

To enter Pointe-à-Pitre, its harbor, with its promontory called

Morne Savon or Morne Patate (potato) (and on which is the largest sugar mill), the ship carefully creeps along amid numberless islets, with the mountains of Basse-Terre looming in the distance.

When Columbus made this landfall in 1493, his record shows that he seemed to have kept well within the eastern portion of this island. He experienced no difficulty this time in finding an appropriate name; as a matter of fact, he had the name all ready for it, and in honor of an Estramadura saint, Santa Maria de la Guadeloupe, he affixed the name Guadeloupe to it. The fierce Caribs, whose acquaintance Columbus did not make, and whom he had not consulted about it, stuck to their own name, that of Curucueria.

Pointe-à-Pitre impressed me almost at once with its charming French appearance: Dilapidated and shopworn, maybe, yet withal exhaling that *joie-de-vivre* that impresses one everywhere the French tricolor waves. Pointe-à-Pitre is actually a combination of the old and the new, truly French provincial, and yet appealing to all who like such things. This appeal extended to the picturesque, brilliantly hued houses with their mansard roofs, to the open air cafés, boulevard-style, and to the small place in the center of the town, the Place de la Victoire, at the end of Rue d'Arbaud (the principal street). Here, the *citoyens* gather, around eleven o'clock in the morning, or in the cool of the evening, to sit and chatter and sip their byrrh, absinthe, amer picon, or rum swizzles; or on festal days, to listen to the band, as well. Just a bit of the flair of Paris; just a little of the boulevard has been transplanted here. This picture would be incomplete were I to forget to draw attention to the venerable sand-box trees that surround the place like a troop of soldiers, and whose seeds, when the pods burst, are scattered far and wide. These trees, so I have learned, have a great historic interest, as they were planted by the ferocious Hugues. It was at this Place de la Victoire, during the Commune, that the guillotine was erected and where many of the royal sympathizers were put to death.

At noon, the merchants and *citoyens* repair home for *déjeuner*, which in itself becomes a French feast, just as things are done in la Belle France. It is remarkable, and also a delightful trait, how close the French colonial, in common with the Dutch and the

British, adheres to the things he is wont to do at home. This is especially so when it comes to the Guadeloupean's food. Most of the dishes, as may be expected, have taken on the creole flavor; as for instance, the courtbouillon, and calalou, le blaf or omelettes au chadrons (sea urchins off the coast). These delicious creole dishes are not confined to Guadeloupe alone, since the creole and French kitchen prevails in all the French West Indian domain. But one dish that I found different from its original, in Marseilles, was the bouillabaisse—owing to the variety of local fish, such as mackerel, balarou and coulibou.

In explaining this, let me begin by stating that bouillabaisse should be recommended only to those who have a tenacity of will to try something new and, in addition, an iron stomach. Incidentally, let me interpolate here that food, its attainment and its preparation is truly the lever that moves this mundane sphere of ours. That is why the voyager on pleasure is constantly confronted by the problem: What do we eat and where do we get it?

I count myself among the so-called professional or hard-boiled travelers (I celebrate at this moment of writing my twenty-fifth "travel anniversary," having started when I was nineteen) in whom cumulative experience has produced what may be termed an urbane philosophy. Yet I do not possess that certain nonchalance toward the food question that one might suppose, since in all my travels I never failed to show an amenability to adventures in food. Just as practically all men have their likes for adventures, so some men have also their penchants for foods. They too, like myself, have found that to eat and to eat wisely is as delightful a pastime as any. Fried scallops, for instance, is a highly palate-tickling delectable dish, but a new Holland herring, such as the home-like, up-to-date American Hotel in Amsterdam knows how to dish up on that delightful, crisply toasted milk-bread . . . man alive, that's my idea of a perfect Dutch treat! When I was a youngster, I could not picture any finer food than a nice juicy Holland herring, with the bones removed, fresh out of the North Sea, and which the Dutch have appropriately called "Zeebanket," or sea pastry. I was not concerned with lobster à la Newburg or soft-shell crabs and many like delectabilities, for it was the humble herring

that was my "sea banquet"—the same as it is for many others of Holland nativity.

Many of our own familiar, plain dishes are to be encountered, with local variations, in these parts of the world; and the number of absolutely unknown food ingredients that I discovered while traveling over here was not very large. It seems to me that it is more their unfamiliar disguises that are sometimes disconcerting.



Speaking of disguises brings me back again to the bouillabaisse, since that dish brings out the Frenchman's traditional knowledge of, and almost unbelievable respect for, the art of preparing foods—esculent, I am sure, but totally unrecognizable.

I had had bouillabaisse before I came to Guadeloupe, the last having been in Marseilles several years ago. At that time I had taken a vow that never again would I allow bouillabaisse, in no matter what company or condition, to pass the portals of my food "gobbler." One such dish, so I had thought at the time, was enough for me for the rest of my existence. But you know how changeable we mortals are, and the males share equally with the female of the species in that quality—which is not always an uncommendable one. In Guadeloupe, therefore, I again "fell for" bouillabaisse. Do not blame me, by the by, if a bit of food here and a wee

morsel there nourishes these pages. Hasn't it often been said that food and love make the world go 'round? And just as an army, according to Napoleon, is enabled to "move on its stomach," so has it been with the globe-trotter or world traveler.

I had spent part of the morning browsing along the streets of Pointe-à-Pitre, where the motor-cars, amidst deafening din, provided a contrast to the heavily laden drays that less noisomely lumbered along market bound. Distinctly Guadeloupe-ish and garishly garbed women, who make these French West Indian Islands so different from the rest of the chain, were jabbering and chattering their often-unintelligible patois, whilst balancing their panniers and offering their wares. I had an appointment with an official, and, as always, I was on time, knowing how punctual Frenchmen usually are (confidentially, I was hungry, and besides, I had been invited). This French official, whom I shall have to call Monsieur Galibert, had promised to initiate me in the fine art of West Indian, or perhaps creole cooking, and which was also to include, as I later learned, the creole bouillabaisse—which, out of *politesse* for my host, I dared not refuse.

Monsieur Galibert, with true Gallic physiognomy, had a mind that was clear and luminous, and a capacity for eloquence—a glib art and expansive sense of humor, which are the usual characteristics of most Frenchmen. His complexion was dark tanned; he was meticulously dressed and had a pair of dark, sparkling eyes, but a prominent proboscis that was delightfully enlivened with a glow . . . well, that convinced me at once that Monsieur Galibert must have been a connoisseur of *le bon vin*. As I introduced myself, he nearly crushed me in his embrace, and as he talked—which he did nothing but—he kept on twisting his well-pomaded mustache. Occasionally he would stroke his meticulously parted hair very tenderly, while simultaneously (I could detect almost a self-complacent smile) his eyes would focus upon my bald pate, and he would sigh. That is the only thing I did not like about Monsieur Galibert—his making me hair, or rather, "hairless" conscious. I was too much of a gentleman to betray my very turbulent inner emotions. I figured I had better keep quiet as it might otherwise spoil the luncheon—and I was, after all, his guest. The *apéritifs*

indeed were good, and as they became more plentiful we waxed more eloquent, as such things go. Decorum melted like wax, and, the way I felt, I could have eaten even a whale; bouillabaisse did not even enter my mind any more.

I was thus fortified for the assault on dear old bouillabaisse at Petit Hotel that, for cooking—so promised Monsieur Galibert—could not be equaled in the whole West Indian area. Having conducted me to the crowning culinary experience, hardly had we seated ourselves, I all set to take in the delightful goings-on around me, when Monsieur began to discourse rhapsodically upon the origins, history, whys and wherefores of the subtle excellence of a dish, which, being of French origin, he did his best to convince me would be the culminating glory of all the repasts that I had ever had. I, however, could not see how it was possible for anyone to wax so ecstatic over a kettle of fish. My head reeled under the impact of praises of this “ambrosia” of the “Bon Dieu” (as my friend defined it) and we had begun to wash down what had been a delightful something that *also* looked and tasted like fish, when up came the picturesquely garbed *café-au-lait* maiden who brought on the dish that would be either my undoing or that would lead me to the heaven of gourmets.

I should not forget at this instant to recall that we also had a most delectable gumbo de Guadeloupe. Of all the unique dishes that the Creole French West Indian cuisine boasts, this gumbo represented, I am sure, a dish evolved under the hands of the finest Guadeloupe chefs. It was superb! It was original, I believe, and was a gumbo that must remain the acme of perfection, the *sui generis*, the *optima forma*, the *crème de la crème* of all gumbos I have ever tasted. It was peculiar to Guadeloupe and of a delicious combination, wherein the shrimps and the ham, the green and the fried peppers, leeks and onions, parsley and celery, shelled crabs and lots of other delectables fought for first place, all conspiring to make me eat two portions, and at the end of which caused me to fairly “lick my chops.” But to return to the bouillabaisse, the *pièce de résistance* of the meal, that was to stand out as the unforgettable moment of my Guadeloupe sojourn. For those who do not know what the word bouillabaisse means, aside from the fact that it is a kettle of fish: the word comes from “bouillir,” which

means boil, and "baisse," which means stop. Well, that may be all very well, but in my case I should have stopped before the fish began to boil. I believe it was Thackeray (or Du Maurier) who, like Monsieur Galibert, also did his bit for bouillabaisse, lifting it from its mundane existence into the clouds, so to speak. But as the Creole proverb so wisely says, "*Macaque ca toujours trouvez iches yo bels*"—"monkeys always find their children beautiful," or rather, "love is blind." I had bouillabaisse again and I still did not like it. Let me recite briefly of what this Guadeloupe bouillabaisse consisted. It was a true fish conglomerate with fish, brought direct from the surrounding sea, as the base. I placed my fork in this fish hash, my host watching me with fixed eye and bated breath—as a cobra might watch a mongoose. Well, I had expected this, so while eating valiantly, as if my very life depended on it, I made grimaces, and grunted, and exclaimed that it was just the finest thing I had ever tasted, although, I must confess that while I kept right on chewing, what I actually was consuming most of the time I really do not know. My host, on the other hand, his mouth filled to overflowing with fish, occasionally salvaged a bone, and while coming up for air, mumbled, "*Prenez garde*" as a warning that I should be careful and use the utmost caution and discretion in eating this dish. We may all believe him, since it is almost impossible to conceive what one can extract from a plate of bouillabaisse. To begin with, there were the garlic and the saffron, and other rare condiments and herbs, including the powdered sassafras and the like, and the fish—mackerel, balarou, and coulibou, and something else that had a most penetrating effluvium. Many a time I turned "the sod" over for a familiar-looking morsel, vainly hoping to find something that I could recognize. In the end I gave it up, and ate with a vengeance, sacrificing myself to the task with grim martyrdom.

When Monsieur Galibert, after a second helping, finally managed a question as to how I liked it, for politeness' sake I replied: "*épatant*," and "*délicieux*." But, just between ourselves, believe me when I say that there won't be any more bouillabaisse for me! As a gourmet, perhaps I lack the finesse and culinary appreciation that these Frenchmen possess.

Since I am on the subject of fishy food, I recall that Père Labat

gave an interesting description of the dark flesh of a bird named diabolotin, or little devil, which he found very fishy in taste, but which was considered by the people then living in the islands as quite a delicacy. Père Labat further stated that this bird was found nowhere but in Dominica and Guadeloupe, where it comes, at fixed times, to breed. According to him, it was the size of a pullet, with black feathers and long, strong wings, and legs that were somewhat short. Its feet were like those of a duck, and had long, thick claws. It was tough, had a curved beak, and large staring eyes. Like the owl, it was blind, or unable to see in the daylight. These birds were for the settlers like veritable manna sent every year by the Lord, since they had very little on which to live during the season. Since these birds could see only in the dark, they were hunted by sunlight, and before they had a chance to return to their haunts they would fall to the ground. They subsisted on fish, which they caught during the night, and they lived like rabbits in the holes of the mountains. While in flight, they would be heard to utter strange cries as if calling to each other. These diabolotins would begin to arrive in Guadeloupe towards the end of September and would remain until the end of November, when they would fly away, to Dominica and other places, not to be seen again until January. During the month of March, these mother birds could be found with their young, whose downy covering made them look like goslings. They were nothing but little balls of fat, called "cottons." These little ones would try their wings by the end of May. The interesting part of the information given was the fact that some of the diabolotins were said to fly to Virginia, when leaving Guadeloupe, and may very well be the birds of passage of Virginia which remain there from May till September.

Theodore Roosevelt also spoke of them, so I heard, at Trinidad . . . which is about all I wish to say about food—fish or fowl—for the time being.

Now, let us revert to Guadeloupe's historical background:

In the course of their bold adventuring in these parts, the Spaniards, after the island's discovery and naming by the Great Mariner, seemed to lose all interest in the place. It was not until many years

later—at least not before the year 1635—that two French adventurers named L'Olive and Duplessis tried their hand at possession, but they gave it up as a bad job.

France's claim to this island was maintained soon thereafter, because the new French trading route to the West Indies demanded a rendezvous and Guadeloupe was as good a place for that as any. The Caribs, who had lived here, though not so peacefully, for years, were subjugated. Most of them were slaughtered, while others were transported to the neighboring islands, Dominica and St. Vincent. Then the white traders introduced slavery, with which the planters' sugar mills were driven. Stimulation to the sugar industry was given by Père Labat, whose mills that were "once driven by slaves" are still to be seen. The French planters were great believers in doing work on a co-operative basis; hence they became producers of sugar on a gigantic scale. If I am not mistaken, they were actually the pioneers of a system of operating one large factory in each particular section, rather than distributing the work over many small ones and thus increasing the overhead—so that mass production, or at least its principle, may not necessarily be the product of our twentieth century. This system may have saved Guadeloupe for King Sugar, for today sugar is still king there; which is borne out by the many sugar centrals that dot the island.

It would be a mistaken idea to believe that the French were left in peaceful possession of this island throughout its earlier history, for the British made several attempts to extricate it from the clasp of France. It was taken from her and given back a number of times.

A memorable event in the history of Guadeloupe occurred with the advent of a certain Victor Hugues, then Commissioner of the French Republic, who took no small part in making this island safe for France. It was under his regime that the declaration for the emancipation of the slaves was promulgated. This laudable idea, however, was devised also with a selfish viewpoint—for, by giving the slaves their liberty, he expected them to aid the French and turn against the British. The British were driven out on July 2, 1794. When, in 1802, Bonaparte re-established slavery, it caused most naturally a bloody insurrection. Needless to say, the slaves

fought as heroically as the Carib Indians had done before them. As a matter of fact, they preferred to kill themselves rather than to submit to their French attackers. But all of their heroism proved in vain, for they were either slaughtered by the French or transported to the other islands as slaves. It was not to be until 1848 that slavery was to become completely abolished. At first the slaves were at a loss what to do with that for which they had so long fought; which again proves the axiom that remedies are often worse than the disease. The island itself at that time was not to enjoy the serene days that distinguish those in this sugar isle today. It was to have another bloody event. This time it occurred in 1810, with the well-known "hundred days"; the British once more possessed themselves of the isle, retaining it, with Napoleon shipped off to Elba, until the peace of 1814. Since then, when it was returned to France, it has remained under French rule.

Aside from Guadeloupe's natural attractiveness, the island still hides among its towns and countrysides vestiges of landmarks of its once so turbulent history. First, we have the sand-box trees which fringe the Place de la Victoire, and which were planted by order of Victor Hugues as a reminder of the defeat of the British on July 2, 1794. This fellow, Victor Hugues, whose ferociousness has become a byword in Guadeloupean history, caused the guillotine to be erected in the Place de la Victoire, and many were the royalists who had their heads chopped off there in October, 1794. Another historic spot is the Morne Savon, a place that no tourist to Guadeloupe should fail to see, for the grim message it conveys. Here is the grave that holds the mortal remains of the ferociousness and fury that once was Hugues. This needs some elucidation: From historical pages I gleaned that in 1794 the British were defeated by the French at Camp Berville and were subsequently forced to evacuate Pointe-à-Pitre, which had been captured by Sir John Jervis and Sir Charles Grey of the British forces. They had been allowed to embark together with twenty-five officers of the royalists, but about three hundred of them and royalist defenders, who had fought like furies, were left behind, with the exception of twenty-five who were beheaded at Pointe-à-Pitre, the remainder being taken across the harbor to the place called Morne Savon. They were lined up before a ditch, or grave, which, ironi-

cally enough, they had been forced to dig themselves. A volley, and over two hundred and seventy-five bodies dropped simultaneously with the heads of the royalists that had been chopped off at Pointe-à-Pitre. Three hundred gallant British soldiers had been despatched to their doom by Hugues' exacerbation. The legend relates that some, due to poor marksmanship, were but wounded; still, that did not prevent their being dropped into the self-made grave, so that dead and living were buried together in one common grave.

It is this grave, this tomb of once-living and dead, that marks one of the darkest pages in the annals of France's colonial history.

Again, another historical landmark is that of the ruins of Fort Fleur d'Epee. It is located on a cliff, and presents a grand view of Grande Baie, as well as of the other French islands, Marie Galante and the Saintes. It commands from its place of vantage on a headland overlooking the Grande Baie an enchanting view over all the neighboring islands. Fort Fleur d'Epee, like so many of these battlements in West Indian Islands, has borne the brunt of much frenzied fighting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as the island changed hands from French to British, and from British back to French. In many of these battles, Commissar Victor Hugues and his men took no inconspicuous part. But what made Fleur d'Epee so outstanding a spot historically is that Captain Robert Faulknor, right from under the very guns of the fort, engaged the French frigate "Pique" in what has become known as a veritable epic of war. It cost him his life, but his name has been added to the galaxy of heroes in the British Hall of Fame.

Briefly, the events which led to the death of Faulknor were the following:

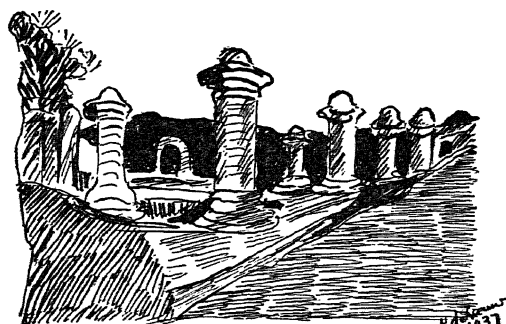
The "Pique" was at anchor, and the "Blanche," with Captain Faulknor on board, did her best to entice the French ship out of her lair, but without success. Faulknor, about to set sail again, boarded a mysterious-looking American schooner whose papers had not been found in order, so he took her master on board of the "Blanche" and then turned about again, to engage the "Pique" in combat. Then, after some skirmishes and long-range fighting, the "Pique" came out. There now ensued (on January 4, 1795) one of the most vigorous attacks ever fought at close range. This

unique battle was so close, in fact, that both vessels were well within gunshot of each other. Then Faulknor, himself, tied the enemy's bowsprit to the capstan of his own ship. The French sailors made unsuccessful attempts to board the "Blanche," and they fought like demons. Their ship was a terrible sight. The "Blanche" was also badly beaten up, her main- and mizzen-masts having been shot away. As the battle progressed, the "Pique" became so disabled that not even one mast remained. Still, all this did not deter both heroic crews from fighting on with unabated fury. At last, victory was won for the "Blanche" and the "Pique" was taken in tow, but at a terrific cost, including the life of the gallant Faulknor, who to the last tried to tie the two ships more securely together. He was shot through the heart two hours before victory was won by Lieutenant Watkins, who thereupon took command upon the death of the brave Faulknor.

This battle, as well as the death of Faulknor and the vicissitudes of the frigates, "Blanche" and "Pique," shook England and created a sensation. His name was on everyone's lips, and "The Death of Captain Faulknor" was the title of a play given at Covent Garden, in London. Parliament, voicing the sentiment of the nation, voted a sum of money in 1795 to erect a suitable token of British esteem and admiration, so that a memorial to this gallant seaman and fighter graces the west wall of St. Paul's Cathedral, commemorating this epic of the sea and showing the world that Britain never forgets her heroes.

Antigua

LANDFALL OF CAPTAIN KIDD



ANTIGUA, WHERE NELSON FITTED FLEET
FAMOUS DOCKYARD



ENGLISH HARBOUR
ANTIGUA

ANTIGUA'S HISTORY IS NO DULL reading. Geologically, this island is different from the rest of the chain, due to its limestone formation, its lack of its own scenic beauties and that grandeur of scenery of its neighbors.

The year 1770 in this island's history will always stand out to me as one worth remembering, for the very reason that Captain Kidd the highwayman of the brine, in that year honored Antigua's governor with a social call. That in itself would not be so important, but for the fact that this gallant tar suggested that he be given command of a small sloop, promising in return to rid the region of all pirates. According to Kidd, the pirates were doing much harm, as they infested that region in great numbers.

The burgher-fathers of Antigua had the doubtful honor of entertaining Captain Kidd for quite a while and he actually became a nuisance. This curious situation reminds one of the fable of the doves who invited the kite to defend them from the hawk. . . . Antiguans were scratching their heads to find a solution to the dilemma and how best to rid themselves of what had turned out to be a bad bargain. As luck would have it, however, Captain Kidd

offered a solution to the problem himself: Without warning and without bidding good-by to those that had been entertaining and actually feeding him, he left post-haste for the Indies, but absent-minded cuss that he was, he forgot to return the sloop and all it contained to the governor.

Antigua, whose name really signifies "place without water," is separated by a relatively narrow channel from St. Kitts, and lies about forty miles north of Guadeloupe and twenty-four miles northeast of Montserrat. Its coast has often been compared to that of the south of England, although it is perhaps scarcely as rugged. In fact, after coming from St. Kitts, where forests and lush verdure abound, this isle seems low and arid. And yet the island is not so low and acarpous as we are led to believe. Its hills in the interior rise to a height of a thousand feet, while an endless chain of dull-grayish gradients rise above the sea—and the dual coastline is enlivened by beautiful white-sanded beaches and bays.

Discovered on the Almirante's voyage of discovery in 1493, who bestowed upon it its Spanish name, in honor of the Spanish Church of Santa Marta la Antigua, in Seville, the island is today the seat of the government of the Leeward Islands, and, if I am not mistaken, has the record of having been under the English flag almost without a break. Since 1632, when it was founded by Edward Warner, a son of Sir Thomas (no newcomer in this book, since I wrote of him in dealing with St. Kitts), it seemed to have been only one year under the French flag, in 1666, given back by the Treaty of Breda in the following year, so that Britannia has ruled this sugar isle ever since.

For those who have little time to peruse the history volumes, I will give the following brief historical facts: Before Warner planted the Union Jack on Antigua's shores, a certain voyager, Antonio Serrano, had failed in his attempt to plant a colony here in 1520, and except for an occasional sightseer, if we can thus speak of these stragglers that roamed around in those days bent on no good, or happened to be shipwrecked upon its then unwelcome shores, Antigua remained *terra incognita* for many years. Then the favorite of Charles I, the Earl of Carlisle, received a grant that included this isle. He did very little here himself but D'Esnambuc with a party of Frenchmen came over from St. Kitts. They

also stayed but a very short time because there was hardly any water to be had. At last Sir Thomas Warner, the English governor of St. Kitts, colonized this island of Antego, as he called it, in the year 1632. The settlement would have prospered at that time, were it not for the Caribs, who came from Dominica and held a grand house-cleaning, carrying off many prisoners among whom, as we have seen, were the wife and baby of the worthy governor himself.

After the Restoration, Charles II granted the isle to Lord Francis Willoughby, who did not live to enjoy his grant because he perished in a hurricane off the coast of Guadeloupe in the year 1665. Thereafter, the island was tossed back and forth in the one hundred and fifty years of war that existed between England and France.

Even to Americans, Antigua must hold some endearment, because among the many that helped defend Antigua during these French and Carib wars was a certain English captain, Samuel Winthrop, or Winthorp as he was then called—a son of John Winthorp of Groton Hall, England (who was the first governor of Massachusetts in the year 1629).

The most momentous event for Antigua came in 1674, when General Codrington of Barbados, making his abode there, commenced to plant sugar. This was a most blessed undertaking because it marked the beginning of an industry that became later the source of the wealth of the people of the island.

But, as I related in other chapters, the Caribs gave these colonists no rest at all. In connection with which there is told an incident by that famous privateer or freebooter, Dampier, who informs us "that the Caribbees had done some spoil in Antigua to the plantation," so that Governor Warner's son, Philip, took a party of men and went to suppress the Indians. This fellow came to a place where his half brother, Indian Warner, lived. There was apparently great joy at their meeting. But there was a "li'l black feller" in the woodpile, for the English Warner furnished much liquor and invited his half-brother to be merry. When the merriment was at its greatest height, Warner ordered his men, when he gave a signal, to murder his half-brother and all his Carib Indians. "Such

perfidious things," continued Dampier, "are a great hinderness of our gaining interest among the Indians. . . ."

Philip Warner was tried, it is true, for the murder of his half-brother, but that he was acquitted, is equally true: His land was returned to him and he was restored all of his other rights. But the why of this, history has neglected to acquaint us with; so that I, too, shall have to let the matter drop. History is packed with incidents and happenings for which there seemed no rhyme or reason. Maybe Longfellow was correct when he called the history of the past a mere puppet show.

Antigua also had its slave insurrections, which were quickly suppressed, with about the same results and repercussion as elsewhere. Which brings us to a great event in the life of the Antiguan, when the island was graced with a visit by Prince William Henry, the sailor prince, later King William IV of Britain. This was not the first visit of British royalty to the West Indian colony, for the debonair young Prince Rupert, grandson of James I, was the first member of the royal family to visit Antigua in 1652. But the account of Prince William Henry's visit intrigued me most; for his visit threw Antigua's notables into a state of nervous frenzy, due to their high pitch of loyal enthusiasm. Upon reading of these strange events, my thoughts carried me back to far-off Celebes, where my humble presence created a similar stir among lowly natives. When I called on a village chief in the interior, the village was thrown into complete and utter confusion. The children of the chief, having seen few strangers, shook like jellies and were subsequently thrown into violent convulsions, with the disastrous result that they suffered attacks of hiccups that took days to stop. These hiccups, the chief proudly explained, were brought on by the spirits, who were pleased over my illustrious (?) visit!

However, I should emphasize here that the notables of Antigua, during the royal visit, did not actually have visitations of hiccups, or other ventosities, but the historian of this momentous event in the Antiguan's life recorded that the Solicitor General of the island, while reading, or rather while attempting to read, an address of welcome, was so overwhelmed by the presence of royalty that he was bereft of speech. The historian of this chronicle, however, seemed

equally all in a pucker and his chronicle was literally overrun with truly *loyal* and *royal* adjectives, the likes and preponderance of which I have seldom, if ever, read in any one welcoming speech. For in his extravagant selection of words, the historian culled at random such words as these, which he used over and over again: "affable" and "gallant," "gracious" and "humble," "polite," "princely" and "serene," "urbane" and "victorious"—throughout a very noble speech, which was most patriotically rendered and in which all Antiguans present unanimously concurred.

Incidentally, in the suite of His Royal Highness was the famous captain, later Admiral Lord Nelson, about whom only a few words of passing notice were given: "Captain Nelson of the 'Boreas' accompanied His Royal Highness." After all, Nelson was then only Captain Nelson, and his big days were yet to come.

Nelson spent many months at this "vile spot," as he called it when he was stationed here from 1784 to 1787, but it was in these years that His Lordship did his courting of Fanny, or was it Fanny Nisbet who did the cooing?

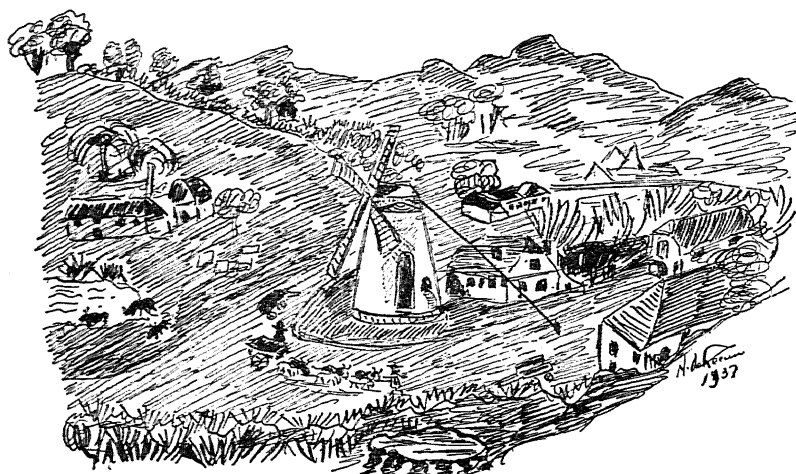
It was also at English Harbor, whose red-roofed buildings are still there, and which were then the old naval barracks where Nelson's sailors lived and, incidentally, also died like flies, during the hurricane months, that Nelson had his memorable dispute with one Captain Montray, Commissioner of the Dockyard. The affair began with a snub and a tiff and ended with Nelson supping and wetting his whistle with the Commissioner that same night—culminating in the two becoming staunch friends.

Today these historic dockyards are deserted and rapidly falling into complete decay.

Nelson was never quite popular with the Antiguans, which also may account for his detestation of English Harbor. This harbor was a hotbed of malaria and disease, while the sailors lived under conditions that were little short of appalling. They died like rats, so that at one time Antigua was called the most infernal place in this hemisphere.

Nelson returned once more to the scene of real war (and of his cooing days), in the year 1805, when he was in hot pursuit of Villeneuve. He put in at St. John with twelve ships, for watering.

Upon reaching Antigua's coast, which is indented by numerous bays, my next landfall was at St. John, capital of Antigua, on the northwest coast of the island and situated on the shallow bay of that name. There was not much of importance that attracted my eye here, except some weatherbeaten forts that guarded the once-important harbor, and the fort, St. James, on the left; or the Goat Hill, which at one time was the scene of the exploits of Prince Rupert, and of the French who landed there in 1666. . . .



VIEW OF N BOUND ANTIGUA
OLD PRINT 1830

St. John itself, situated on a declivity, reveals a rather picturesque appearance, is well built, and has wide streets that run parallel to a roadway that skirts the beach. Many of the white and pastel-colored stuccoed wooden dwellings are one story high, and are provided with verandas, mansard roofs, and shutters. The reason is that many catastrophes of earthquakes have ravaged these parts, hence the one-storied houses prove the safest. Towering over St. John as a spiritual sentinel is the Cathedral of the Anglican Church, with its twin-domed towers. This cathedral replaces the one that was destroyed by a quake in 1843.

Otherwise, the town, with its numberless colored, be-ginghamed hucksters, who, like those in other islands, are veritable jugglers with food and fruit, offers very little of variance from those of the other West Indian English islands. The old part of the town, de-

stroyed partly by a number of earthquakes, still retains its ancient aspect, in which the light-painted houses with their porches, galleries and shutters, make a delightful pattern of contrast.

Sugar is the island's bread-and-butter line, although Sea Island cotton has also become an important staple. I understand that at one time, in the days of slavery, there were more than one hundred and fifty refineries, or, to be more nearly exact, old sugar estates, in the island. Many of them utilized windmills and very small sugar refineries. With the fortunes of trade, the trends of time, and the turn of the century, there are today but a few. They have become up-to-date, large refineries, and marketing and trading are on a co-operative basis.

This brings me to a contemplation of a less prosaic matter, that of the lepers. For all who are so afflicted, a retreat, or lazaretto, has been provided, which is situated on a little island. It is called Rat Island, and one hardly notices it as one comes up the bay. This Rat Island used to be a fortification at one time, but since its newer use it has been connected with Antigua by a sort of causeway—which is often the last stretch, or mile, for the unfortunates.

There are a couple of other interesting things to be seen at Antigua, one of which is Monks Hill, and its ruins of Great-George Fort, a citadel once supposedly used as a place of refuge for women and children when the place was attacked, but I have been told that this place never was used for that purpose.

As the road winds 'round the base of Monks Hill, one comes to Falmouth, a little place fallen in decay, and slumbering long since the once-great days, when its streets, gaming houses and pubs reverberated with the songs and laughter of the redcoats and bluejackets.

In consequence of the great spiritual and social service work done by the Moravian Brothers, the native population of Antigua was always referred to in the olden days as the most literate and genteel of the Antilles, and utterly free of vulgarity. This condition still prevails and, thanks to the work of these Moravian Brothers, the natives here are indeed to be complimented for their exemplary behavior—something that one cannot always say for those in some of the other islands. As I already have inferred, the Caribs, since the attack upon them following the murder of the

Warner offspring, have practically disappeared, though a legend has lingered among the islanders, certifying also to the hate that the Caribs harbored for all that was white:

It concerns a Carib slave girl of rank and of royal blood, Zulmeira, who was in the service of a British governor of Antigua at one time. Her pride having been hurt by him, for one reason or another, she sought revenge. She attended the meeting, which was held in a grotto, of a great number of armed Caribs who had decided to murder the British. Zulmeira, who was beautiful, was greatly in love with an English officer by the name of Ralph. Fearing for his life, she returned to the governor's mansion to forewarn him. She then hurried back to the grotto of the Carib leader, Cuanaboa, to try to forestall the conspirators. They had already departed for the carnage, however, and had returned again to celebrate the victory. At this celebration they swore revenge, and could hardly wait to eat of the flesh of their victims. Zulmeira was forced to sit in at the feast and then observed that the slaughter had also included her lover, whose roasted hand she had just begun to chew. Concealing her emotions, she managed to hide the head of her lover. After the vile banquet, however, the crazed Caribs forced her to show them the way into the settlement of the whites. She obeyed, though firmly resolved to seek revenge. She swore to drink the blood of Cuanaboa and then to end her own life. Having fallen in an ambuscade, the Caribs were drawn into a terrific carnage with the British soldiers. It was during this saturnalia that Zulmeira wrested a sword from the hand of a soldier and forced it through the heart of Cuanaboa. Then with great gusto she drank the blood from his wound, and mixing with it some of the blood of her lover, forced a dagger through her own heart. Thus did Zulmeira have her revenge.

The tragedy of this lovely Carib princess, Zulmeira, took place in 1650, at "Indian Creek"—which place tourists visiting the island today may see.

Dominica

AND ITS UNCROWNED KING



PAGE of COLUMBUS' LETTER *Handwritten* 1492
TO SANCHEZ (KING FERDINAND) 1493
DESCRIBING HIS DISCOVERY
OF AMERICA



ROSEAU. DOMINICA

BEFORE OUR ARRIVAL AT DOMINICA, a British colonial planter had been singing the praises of the Uncrowned King of that lovely island. I was distinctly intrigued by this story, which was the odyssey of the late Sir Alfred Nicholls, who died in 1926, and who gave his unremitting efforts and zeal for his Empire and Dominica, and about whom I shall write in some of the later paragraphs. But let us first devote ourselves to Dominica's history and description.

Though many early travelers made reference in their writings to an island identifiable as Dominica, the first one to speak of it under that particular name was again our friend, Christobal Colon. On a bright Sunday of November 3rd, in the year 1493, on what was his second voyage in quest of the Indies, he discovered Dominica, located close to Martinique and Guadeloupe, and named it in honor of the day. Finding here a rockbound coast without landing place, he turned back to Marie Galante, a smaller island, so named after his own vessel, leaving the then ferocious Caribs in peace (which was just as well) until they were disturbed in 1627.

Due to the stubborn attempts at resistance by these Caribs, permanent settlement in Dominica was not effected until long after the other islands about had become flourishing and civilized communities. As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, the Caribs of Dominica showed the most indomitable spirit of any. Gradually, however, as European settlements became stronger, reprisals against them also became more frequent, and they were treated like wild beasts and killed where found. Du Tertre, the historian of those days, gives an instance of their untamable nature when he reported that the English governor of Montserrat found out very soon that these Dominican Caribs, when taken to Montserrat, showed the most prodigious aversion for servitude. Though he loaded them with heavy chains to prevent their running away, they yet dragged themselves to the seaside. Enraged at their obstinacy, he had their eyes put out, but this too availed him nothing. The Caribs "preferred being left to die of grief . . . and hunger, rather than go on living as slaves."

There are many moral aspects to the eternal question as to what right one race has to dominate or to destroy another. The indisputable fact remains that such things have, and frequently still do, come to pass, as evidenced by Japan's actions in China and Italy's in Ethiopia. We had that same occurrence when the Indians who roamed our plains were ruthlessly destroyed and practically annihilated. The British colonials had it when they decimated a once so-powerful race, the Maoris, of whom not one remains. In similar fashion the so-called cultured races reduced the once so-numerous race of Carib and Arowak in the West Indies to a pitiful remnant, all tell-tale pages in white man's historical chronicle of progress at the expense of human destruction.

One by one the islands around Dominica were evacuated and with the dawn of the seventeenth century the Caribs remained as masters only of Guadeloupe, Dominique and Martinique. And even there, small settlements of daring colonists settled at the mouths of rivers and in localities on the seaboard, where the configuration of the country admitted of an easier defense in case of attack. Du Tertre (to whom, together with Labat and Abbé Roynal, I am indebted for much of my information of the earliest French history of these islands) informs us that the French had established

themselves securely in Dominica in 1633. There existed then 938 Caribs, living in 32 carbets (communities), while the French numbered 349 with 338 colored slaves. From their rugged and almost hidden strongholds the Caribs kept on pillaging the plantations of the outlying settlers, and in 1635, assisted by companions from bands on neighboring St. Vincent, the Caribs descended upon the French. They were 1500 strong, yet, almost incredible, the dauntless French drove them off. The Caribs sued for peace but, gathering strength and numbers in the course of a year or two, they resumed their marauding attacks, and Antigua and St. Kitts and even Porto Rico were encompassed in their scarlet itinerary. So troublesome were these Caribs, opposing all attempts on the part of the colonists to settle or even explore Dominica proper, and so inaccessible was the terrain, that the historian Davies (who may never have landed there or, if so, only stayed close in to shore) wrote from Dominica in 1666 that Dominica was but a howling wilderness, inhabited by hordes of hostile savages who kept away from the coast, hiding in forests and fortifying their almost inaccessible mountain encampments—"though undoubtedly I would say the Caribs had good reason to keep away from the coast, since the practice of which many colonists are accused, of stealing and enslaving the Indians, even Colonel Warner having been so charged with that unlawful traffic . . ."

Records show that even before 1666 the British had tried their hand at colonizing this island when, in 1627, a party of Englishmen, presuming on a lavish gift of King Charles to the Earl of Carlisle, tried to take possession of Dominica. But their venture, like that of their French contemporaries, came to grief, and it was not until 1748 that France and Great Britain agreed, by the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, to leave this wonder isle to the Caribs as a sort of neutral ground. But treaties then, as many treaties today, were merely "scraps of paper"—made to be broken later. The colonists of those days had consciences as flexible as many of our modern diplomats. Their treaties became merely instruments of convenience to hoodwink one another and so to recoup their losses. Neighboring islanders persisted in making encroachments so that at the beginning of the War of 1756-1763 the British captured Dominica again. There ensued once more a period of pillory, sav-

agery and carnage, not only by the Indians but also by the whites, and as James Rodway so graphically depicted in his "History of the West Indies," "Hundreds died of starvation, thousands committed suicide, many jumped from precipices. They hanged, they stabbed and they drowned, they poisoned themselves. Mothers destroyed their babies to save them from the misery of living. If caught in such attempts they were flogged. They had boiling water and molten lead poured over them and were otherwise tortured to death, until death came to their relief. . . ."

At the end of this Carib war, Great Britain was confirmed in possession of the land she had swallowed up and quite "benevolently" appointed a commission to dispose of the land to colonists. They magnanimously permitted even French colonists, who had as much right to grab as they, to remain or take the oath of allegiance simply by paying a moderate quit-rent. The British plan worked well for a few years, until the French decided to take advantage of Britain's plight with the rest of the colonies and, two years after our Declaration of Independence, in 1778, attacked the island, forcing the English to capitulate. It was recovered again by Rodney when the title was conceded by the treaty of Versailles five years later. The French attacked again when La Grange in 1795 summoned the Governor-General Prevost to surrender. This period is best known, due to the historic march made by the British through the bush to Prince Rupert's Bay at the northern end of the island, as the "période La Grange," at which time the French relinquished their hold. This also gave control of the island to the British, where they have remained until this day. Such is the history, briefly summarized, of an island that now bulks large in the group of British-owned islands in the Caribbean Sea. Dominica, it may also be remarked, is the only island where pure-blooded descendants (or as close to it and at least as many as have escaped inbreeding and miscegenation) of the original inhabitants of the Antilles exist. Their reservation, called Salybia, is under government protection—evidence of a desire to make *amende honorable* to the remnants of a race that gave the Caribbean its name, and whose ancestors undoubtedly roamed and hunted in this naturalist's paradise long before our Lord was born.

Geologically, Dominica owes its appearance, like the rest of

the islands in this Caribbean Sea girdle, to a fold in the earth crust of distinct volcanic origin. This is shown by the cone-like peaks and serrated ridges which make their appearance almost as soon as one's ship comes within sight. In fact the island comprises, with the various peaks and mountain ridges, of which some of the cloud-capped peaks are more than four and five thousand feet high, the highest points of a great mountain range that must at one time have connected the South American continent with all the dots and spots and islands and inlets of the Lesser Antilles. The peaks of this fold are its two active craters, whose solfataras, or volcanic vents, yields sulphurous vapors and steam that speak for the last stages of this volcanic activity. The island also has many sulphurous, chalybeate and thermal springs located in the most enchanting spots. The highest of the craters, containing the boiling lake and springs of boiling water, is located amidst deep and awe-inspiring gorges. Interspersed with these are dense virgin forests that clothe the mountain ranges in their tropical vegetation of indescribable luxuriance. In fine, Dominica is so precipitous, so rugged and uneven of aspect, that even Columbus had to use the following method in describing its ruggedness to Isabelle, his Queen: Taking a piece of paper, or parchment, he crumpled it up and threw it down on the table. "This, Your Majesty," said he, "is a visible picturization of Dominica's most striking characteristics, as seen by me from the sea." The island is located twenty-five miles south of Guadeloupe and north of Martinique, has a length from north to south of twenty-nine miles and a breadth of twelve to sixteen miles, and supports a population of thirty-eight thousand, of which a few are whites and the majority colored.

It was our great fortune to approach Dominica just before sunrise. As we careened outside Roseau, the capital, we stood leaning over the railing anxious not to miss anything of the sight that we knew awaited us once the first gleam of the morning sun would strike fire over this isle of distinct beauty. Slowly the bold outlines, which had been visible long before we approached the shore, assumed shape. The precipitous coast rose majestically in a succession of cliffs and terraces that towered ever higher and higher to Morne Diablotin (correctly termed Devil Mountain), the high-

est mountain in all the Antilles, rearing its heaven-kissed head more than a mile above the sea.

The sun made its appearance but, as though to tantalize us, disappeared again in a moment, and in a few minutes we were treated to a downpour of rain which, though mild, was unwelcome since it barred from view all this panorama of delightful contrasts in shades and hues. But we were not disappointed for very long, for although Dominica is blessed with much rain, which comes down with usual tropical generosity sometimes in the dry and practically continuously in the wet season, the sun shines in the interims with its usual serene splendor. And to a shining example of this splendor we were now treated.

Although the clouds still clung pretty thickly above the pasture lands and the foothills, the atmosphere had become quite a bit brighter and we could almost trace the course of many mountain streams that leaped from crag to crag, down glens and through gorges, ending their mad rush near the coast. The bright green of the hillsides and the plantations showed fresh and delightfully vivid, glistening and shining as if gold lurked beneath their surface. The foliage of trees and palms and brush and shrub was so immediate in its visibility that we could almost believe we distinguished the sound of drip from the drench it had had an hour before. From the mountains, whence still came the roll of thunder and flashes of lightning, soft and singing winds bore to us the whispers of the falling rain. When the sun had completely cleared, and a half rainbow hung clearly visible, the outlines of the rugged mountains sharply defined against the new-washed sky presented a picture so beautiful and so enchanting that its description is beyond compare. Seldom, not even in the South Seas or in the East Indies, have I seen such contrasts of light and shadow, such a magic pattern on which nature lavished its full palette of incredible coloring as this landscape view of Dominica in an early morning hour.

A refreshingly soft breeze blew steadily and seemed to carry on it faintly jumbled noises from the little port-town of Roseau. As seen from the deck it was a most picturesque city, but when viewed from within was a dilapidated yet unmistakably French little city, with its small fort, Government House and terraced garden, its roofed market place and its old French cathedral and

almost somber, shingle-roofed houses. Beyond, sinister and remotely aloof, was Morne Diablotin, the devil mountain, or the Mountain of the Black Devil-Bird.

Upon landing at Charlotte Town, or Roseau, by which name it is better known, we found that the questionable beauties of this dilapidated town, which had seen better days, were soon exhausted. Besides its decidedly old French cathedral, it had also an English church and Wesleyan chapel. Before heading for the attractive and world-renowned tropical garden, situated in a valley on the left bank of the Roseau River at the foot of Morne Bruce, five hundred feet above sea level, we decided to take a look at the market. Our reason for this was that, in a naturalist's paradise whose many rivers are stocked with all sorts of delectable fish, and where forests abound with birds and other gastronomic specialties that vie with one another to tickle the palate of such epicures as the British planters are, a market is very often the mirror of a place, the pulse where one may catch the nature of the people at its best. As is to be expected, a tropical island like Dominica grows a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, flowers and trees, some of them known to the American's and foreigner's sophisticated eyes, others as strange-looking as an umbrella on a sunny day or as rare as an American wooden Indian. The market here is an institution and, as elsewhere where natives congregate, it plays an important and, I may add, an indispensable part in the retail merchandising system of the peoples of Dominica. It is as great a temptation to the housewife of the white planter as, for instance, our department and general stores are for our own women. My impression of the market in this tiny cathedral city was that of the busy little center of a busy little town . . . and of a population half-French and half-colored, of a hub of bustling activity, where jabbering, chattering, gossiping women were offering their wares with as much concern as men and women everywhere gathered on really big business.

abundant that one literally fixes his own price; while landcrabs, regarded (by others than myself) as a great gastronomic delight, and those large frogs, or mountain chickens, that the natives are wont to hunt by the use of a torch, are plentiful. These frogs, by the way, are procurable in large quantities and are dished up like chicken. I also noticed some wriggling things that I thought I had seen the last of in Borneo, on the Mahakam River, at a native feast. I little thought to see them again, intended for food, yet here they



were, sold under the name of Gugu worms. They were most unappetizing in appearance, as worms usually are, but they nevertheless seemed to be much in favor with a certain type of gourmet of Dominica, as they were greedily haggled for. I must confess that I did not go for them in a big, not even a small, way. I have eaten worms, unconsciously in China and unknowingly in Borneo, and if I never eat them again it won't be too soon for me—however, "*de gustibus non disputandum est*," or, "there is no disputing of taste."

At the market I also saw some Diablotin, the winged little devils about which I have spoken in my Guadeloupe chapter. These were most peculiar to look at and I was immensely pleased to behold them with my own eyes. At one time, so I learned, great numbers of these devil birds used to be pickled or, rather, salted and despatched with great haste to the natives of Martinique who, instead

of eating them, used to take a flyer with the birds. This, I fear, needs some further explanation. It seemed that the natives would exchange the pickled birds for musket, gunpowder and balls. This racket went on until stopped by the authorities, thus ending at the same time the bird-pickling business as well.

The "petit marche" had its attractions, but nothing in all Dominica attracted me so much as the botanical garden, one of the most attractive I have seen in all the world, topping perhaps, in a way, even the one at Buitenzorg, Java, which, until Roseau, I thought had surpassed them all for variety and for natural garden beauty. To begin with, the gorgeousness of Dominica vegetation can hardly be exaggerated. There were orchids of incomparable beauty and hue gracing the bark of huge trees, while flowering vines and lianas fought with other parasites for first place; bamboos of all sizes and plumage; palms the likeness of which I had vainly looked for in other tropical climes, shrubs and plants and ferns and vines that were difficult to classify, even by a seasoned botanist, and some of which even drew their nourishment from the air and not the soil. Much of this richness in verdure is due to the salubrious climate, the somewhat excessive moisture and the reappearance of the sun which always warms up the rain-drenched soil. The volcanic texture of the soil proves a blessing besides. The botanical garden is barely five minutes away from the landing place, at the foot of Morne Bruce, situated in a rich and sheltered valley a few hundred feet high and consisting of many acres. Whether you go there in the morning or just before twilight and wait for the moonlight there, a visit to this place is an ecstatic delight. Its lawns are replete with rows of palms and trees from all parts of the compass. Trees line the smooth gravel paths, giving added shade to numberless beds of flowers and shrubs. As it would consume too many pages of this volume to describe all the beauty of the garden, suffice to enumerate but a few of the strangest species, such as the cow tree with its fragrance; the stately Ceiba; the bamboos, even surpassing the specimens beheld at Trinidad or Guiana, or in the Borneo forests; the Pandanus, many of which I have always admired in the Batavia garden, and whose leaves are ever useful to the *blanchisseuses*, or laudresses, for carrying their washing and to protect them from the rain; the guava; the nutmeg; the pepper;

the coffee and the cinnamon and the cannon-ball tree, with its globular fruit the size of a true cannon-ball; and then all the spices originally from Celebes and the Moluccas; vanilla and malacca apple; rubber trees and gutta percha, cassava and tapioca—enough to stock an A. & P. store with all its variety of condiments and flavorings.

Besides these there were the hothouses or, rather, thatched sheds (such as the ones seen in Guiana and other places) surrounded by gigantic bamboos, with a variety of multicolored orchids dangling from tree barks, trees, and growing in embered pots—all princes and princesses of the plant world and members of the *Linnaeus* family that reaches a total of perhaps from three to four thousand species. Once the visit is finished at the garden, another aesthetic delight gladdens our eye, for the view from the hill back of the town is one that is not easily forgotten. Spread out at one's feet are the gardens and 'way below is the town with the blue Caribbean to the west; the foaming river winds through lime groves that festoon valley and dales and hillsides, while close by one beholds a silver brook cascading down the gray rocks; and embracing it all are the forest-clad mountainsides.

In the mile-wide Roseau River valley the light-colored, bronze-limbed *blanchisseuses* come faithfully each day to wash and beat their cottons and linens in the palm-fringed, rock-strewn, sparkling stream. Here they chatter and laugh and cajole in their strange creole patois and put a lively note of passionate color into the green, yellow and brown tapestry.

A few steps from the entrance to the garden is the famous Bath estate—the principal factory of M. Rose & Cie., the largest lime estate and probably the largest lime producer in all the world. It is at this point that I come back to the late Sir Alfred, Dominica's uncrowned king, with mention of whom I opened this chapter, and who had so much to do with the growth of the lime industry.

But I cannot write of Sir Alfred without drawing in the name of another man who has done much for Dominica and whose name will never be forgotten by its citizenry. It is that of Dr. John Imray, a former medical officer, who first introduced the cultivation of limes when the country was on the verge of ruin. The coffee and sugar industries, as a result of the emancipation of the

slaves, had failed. An insect blight had played additional havoc with the coffee crops. When a severe hurricane completed its dirty work, the short-lived prosperity of the plantations came to an end, and they yielded only such crops as yams and cassava and arrow-root, which added little to the wealth of the people. It was then that Dr. Imray, after visiting Sicily to ascertain how lemon juice and citric acid were prepared, became inspired with a plan which he first tried out on his own Leeward Coast estate, the Batalie sugar estate, and which involved concentrating the juice of the old and existing lime trees.

This concentrate he shipped to a Liverpool firm. The reports obtained were better than expected, with the result that he began to replace the existent cane brakes with lime trees. Hence the Batalie estate of Dr. Imray became Dominica's first lime grove, and the first in all the West Indies. The island of Montserrat followed suit, securing a small consignment of plants with Dr. Imray's permission, and thus founding the Montserrat lime industry.

And now a few words about Sir Henry Alfred Nicholls who, as one of the greatest authorities on tropical agriculture and also as a practical economist, took up the work where Dr. Imray had left off. Dr. Imray was an old man when Sir Henry came upon the scene, arriving in Dominica at a time when the planters again were going to rack and ruin, and the peasants, who were on the point of starvation, were abandoning their work to go to more prosperous neighboring lands. Dr. Imray's energies were at a low ebb when the island needed him most, so that Sir Henry (having come from an Aberdeen medical practice) was "actually the Joshua who led the people of Dominica into the Promised Land."

Sir Alfred, who came to Dominica in the year 1875, the year of that island's greatest depression, has earned for himself a unique and immortal place in the island's history. For years before his arrival in Dominica he had given to his Empire a life filled to the brim with that same assiduity that carried him to the farthest-flung outpost of the British Empire. He had concerned himself with research in malaria, yellow fever and many other tropical diseases, so that his choice of Dominica as his next field of action was indeed a milestone in the history of this island.

To his energy and enthusiasm, his practical knowledge and scien-

tific curiosity (he conducted a series of experiments on a small plantation, acquired for that purpose, at St. Aromont), the great development of the infant Dominica lime industry was due. Under his expert guidance it grew and grew until today it is the chief means of livelihood and king-pin industry of the island.

Dr. Nicholls was not only a mine of information on tropical agriculture and arboriculture, but he was also an explorer of no mean repute. When he arrived at Dominica, in 1875, or thereabouts, the island was an all but unexplored howling wilderness. For centuries there had lingered a tradition, or legend, among the natives, and especially among the Carib Indians on the reservation, that Dominica had its own Eldorado, not unlike Guiana's mythical Lake Parima, that lured Sir Walter Raleigh and many others to the Spanish Main. The legend related to a Lake of Fire somewhere in Dominica's interior, where neither white man nor native had ever trod.

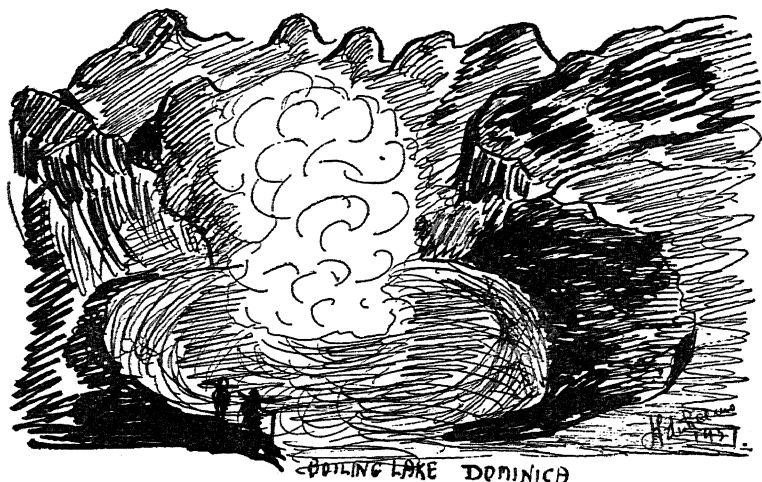
This seventeenth-century legend had it further that there existed, two or three hours from Roseau, a monstrous serpent with a jewel the size of a carbuncle embedded in its head. This fantastic jewel was said to be equipped with a movable skin like that of an eyelid. When the monster went to drink or was browsing about the countryside, the rocks and forests for miles around would become illuminated by the weird sheen or luster caused by the fires and phosphorescence issuing from the precious jewel.

It was the mysterious legend about this Eldorado of Dominica that the Doctor decided to investigate. So on a very bright morning in January of the year 1875, the Doctor and two friends, having been stirred by the news that a peculiarly dense white cloud had shrouded the highest ridges, giving off sulphurous smells that even reached and enveloped Roseau itself, resolved to set out on the long-planned voyage of discovery—a voyage that would take them into the very nucleus of the then still mysterious and unexplored island.

After three days had expired, during which the populace sat on pins and needles, the Doctor and his friends returned with the startling news that they had discovered the legendary lake, a boiling one at that—and thus closed a romantic episode in the history of Dominica.

This boiling lake, which since has become the mecca for many exploring parties, was a most impressive one and the largest *soufrière* known throughout the West Indian area. The existence of this natural safety valve answered the question of why Dominica is kept entirely free from volcanic eruptions.

The lake itself is more than a hundred yards across, with a depth said to exceed even three hundred feet, while the temperature of its



water at times reaches two hundred degrees. When the lake is in a state of absolute ebullition, water spouts are oftentimes forced several feet above the lake's level by the pressure of escaping gases.

In an island as majestic and rugged as Dominica there are, as can be expected, many other spots of natural beauty such as the sulphur fumaroles at Wotten Waven, two extinct craters, and the hot springs at various locations in the island. The hot springs at Laudat, which are situated about 2000 feet in the mountains and are said to have curative properties, can be reached by a ride of about seven miles. For mountain climbers, the ascent of the Trois Pitons or Diablotin (the highest mountain in all the West Indies), provides as much sport, I venture to say, as some of the Rocky or Alpine climbs.

But the trip to the Boiling Lake is an expedition of no mean endeavor for those who like to rough it and actually can take it. One morning that luckily was quite rainless and bright with na-

ture in all its enchanting beauty, we set out for the boiling lake, first laid eyes upon by Sir Alfred in his 1875 expedition, who found it occupying an old volcanic crater on a slope of the Grand Soufrière Mountain.

Mounted on our ponies and guided by ambidextrous native cicerones, we started from the hamlet of Laudat, whence the road climbs up the beautiful Roseau valley to an altitude of at least 2000 feet, unfolding majestic views wherever our eyes happened to turn.

At our feet, dozing in perennial heat, were the gardens and the snug, sleepy little town of Roseau. Bordering the horizon, and practically embosoming us, towered the infinite mountains, capacious in their numberless folds, chasms and vughs, huddled together, Cyclopean-wise, in a hopeless confusion. They were blanketed with endless forests whose colorings seemed to blend into an amalgam of rugged beauty.

The temperature was quite warm, yet not offensive, although from the puffing of our carriers and guide (and, to let you in on a secret, my own puffing) it became evident that clambering up the gradient was quite a formidable task.

To the east, shimmering like a vast polished silver platter, was the Atlantic, and to the west, the Caribbean, and spread out on them the countless small and large islands, like so many reniform mudpies. A foaming river curled like a snake through lime and fruit orchards that covered groves, glens and dales. Below we spotted playful little brooks cascading down rocks and gullies, and like British Columbia or Fraser River salmon, leaping from crag to crag. Faintly we could detect the odor of sulphur, that gave fair indication of what was yet in store for us. After a short stop we continued our trek to the lake which, according to our guide, could be reached in less than five hours. As we ascended the steeper road, the radiance of the vegetation even in the forest regions utterly dazzled me, at times comparing with the sublimity of colorings and contrasts as I have seen them on the mountainsides in Celebes, Java or Sumatra. It was the forest trek that interested me more, since it afforded me a chance to compare notes—having seen a forest or two in my traveling career. Forests are true biological headquarters, so to speak, wherein one sees life at its fullest, fiercest

and, I might add, its fieriest and best. Now, I do not say this merely because in tropical forests one sees the struggle for existence carried on with greater energy, both among animals and plants, but because tropical forest life is so different, so far apart, from the tropics itself. These tropical forests have a greater value for naturalists and biologists than have the ordinary zones, for here herbs and shrubs and trees, and palms, beasts, birds and reptiles abound with a difference—a richness and naturalness unfamiliar to the lower tropical strata.

In this Dominican forest, differing little from the tropical forests I have trekked through in the Guianas or in Malaysia, the evidence of continual development is beyond the slightest question. Every animal, every tree was a living example of environment, and of natural and sexual selection—proving conclusively that whether here or in the civilized world, the struggle for life and the survival of the fittest goes on unceasingly. It is only when it is untainted by contact with civilization that evolution is at work at its best, as it has been at work for eons.

Something else that stood out, as I now reflect on my impressions of this forest trek, were the antics of those scavengers of the forest, the ants, who were carrying on a tremendous task of the utmost importance to them. I remember watching for a full hour the most ubiquitous of these ants, a special kind of termite. I knew from past experience that these scavengers were able to bring down the biggest tree, causing it to collapse into the rich brown humus that is so characteristic of most forests.

Now, the decomposition which takes place in a tropical forest is different from that which takes place in open tropical places. Instead of the alterations of sun and rain, here in the forests we may have a constant dank, humid, moist temperature that, however, is always the same. It therefore follows that the decomposition will also be even and continuous.

The termites that I happened to observe at their work of destruction in the Dominican forest, burrowed through an apparently healthy jungle giant, and their burrowing seemed to go in all directions. I noticed that these burrows allowed the moisture and water to penetrate. I realized that in a comparatively short time the wood would crunch under my feet as if it were a mere eggshell (some

of this wood I tested, and it was almost as hard as the Guiana greenheart, or possum, which rings like metal under the blows of an ax).

That dumbfounded me again as it had done many a time before. But there was a good reason for it, which is paralleled in the case of our own bodies. Just as sickness or disease will not commence their dirty work unless our bodies open a way for them to take hold of us, so it was with this tree and the scavenging termites. These termites had found a sickly branch and planted a nest of their kind in the fork. It was from this sort of headquarters that their deadly work began. It was evident that a hale and hearty tree, without a blemish, so to speak, would be left alone. But since there were a great number of these dying and decaying forest giants, as well as shrubs and plants strewn about, this seemed to be the termites' happy hunting-grounds. And the sight of these little obnoxious creatures scurrying to and fro told a tale all its own, giving us the knowledge that another victim was succumbing to the struggle of destruction and evolution.

And now, on with the trip:

Having crossed through forest and open portions for some time, we came at last well within sound and sight of the Valley of Desolation, as the boiling lake is also called. Here the most profuse tropical verdure gave way to the caldron and spitfire desolation of the boiling lake. Here all hell bubbled underneath. The crater bottom hissed and boiled with sudden bursts of sulphur and steam shooting up in the air almost every second. To add to our discomfort, the sulphur under our feet worked havoc upon our eyes. Yet all this did not hold us back, and we made the descent to as close a place at the crater crust as we dared, wending our way most carefully.

The lake itself, close to the many springs at the lower end of the crater, raged like a tiger. Towards the center, and hemmed in by perpendicular walls of pumice and ash, geyser-like masses were ejected in ever-changing places to greater heights, to fall back into the boiling caldron again. Jets of steam from the spouting fumaroles, that to me seemed dangerously sulphurous and obnoxious, were following each fresh burst like a shot out of a cannon.

Aghast, we stood there and stared. Our words were hardly audible to each other as we looked about the strange and weird place that offered such a decided contrast. On one side was the boiling inferno, beneath us was the seething caldron, around us rose the mountainsides, blanketed with a wild and gorgeous array of vegetation, in sharp contrast with the deep green of the forests.

Our guide informed us that at times the lake would be semi-quiescent for days and then, without warning, would boil up again and overflow the crater, once more to ebb back and then subside into the depths, relapsing into a silence that was broken only by the gentle whisperings of the breeze that played through the tops of the stately trees. At times superstitious natives would come and visit this place, bringing offerings of fruit and other edibles to the rim of the lake to appease what they believe to be the mountain spirits. Legend has it that visitors who venture too close to its border are sucked to the bottom of the caldron by a sudden and irresistible force, and are thus punished for presuming to disturb the peace of the spirits. That the bottom of this caldron and lake has never been reached by soundings is easy to imagine.

Considering the superstitious tendencies with which the colored native is endowed, it is no wonder that many tales and legends have been hatched about this awe-inspiring place. Many natives dare not visit it, believing that miserable and vengeful ghosts and evil spirits wander about, perpetrating dirty work and nasty tricks. I tried to engage my guide on the subject of spirits and ghostly apparitions, but dropped the attempt almost at once, for he shook like an aspen leaf and twitched about and jumped like a parched pea, so I decided to leave well enough alone and became reabsorbed in watching the caldron and sulphur-encrusted earth, or the encrustation that seemed white with salt, or others again with iron oxide or magnesium.

But it was time to make a break—there was nothing that we could do about this Hell's Kitchen and so, leaving the suppressed force of the underworld conspiring and boiling, we gladly returned to the cool of the forests. Here we found immense relief, after the heat, the smell, and our laborious trekking to leave the caldron behind. Once out of the forest, 'way overhead, in contrasting serenity, shimmered once more the light azurean sky. . . .

I could go on giving my impressions of Dominica *ad infinitum*, but feel that I must beware lest they be prolonged to the point of being also *ad nauseam*! One could spend many months in this wonder isle of sparkling brilliant color and write volumes about its marvels and its hidden enchantments. But space and time set a limitation on any further devotion to its treasures. Therefore, I must be content at this time to depict simply a sort of background upon which the reader can draw and complete his own picture, which will offer him an island that is a priceless gem, blazing with a million dazzling facets. As one chronicler so aptly put it, "There is more beauty to the square inch in Dominica than in any other land on this globe."

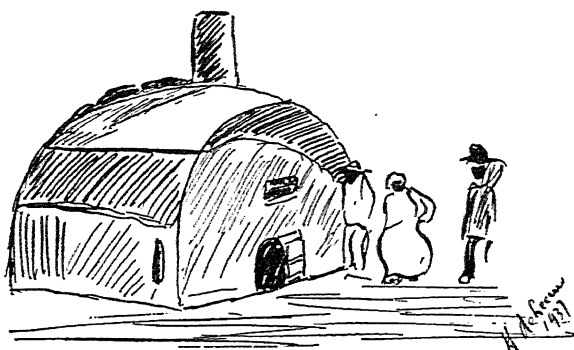
Martinique

PULSE OF THE FRENCH WEST INDIES



STATUE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE

FORT DE-FRANCE
MARTINIQUE



CELL OF
ONLY SURVIVOR
ERUPTION IN ST PIERRE
MONT PELÉ MAY 8, 1902

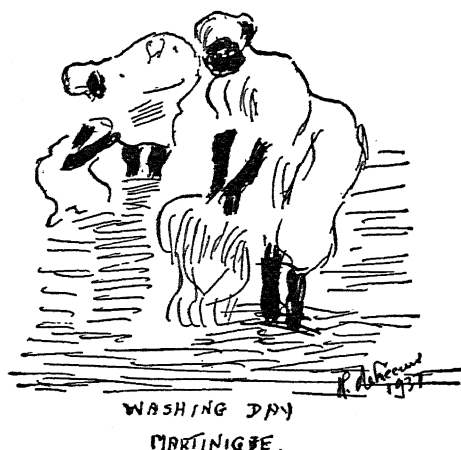
IT WAS EARLY MORNING OF ASCENSION Day, May the eighth, 1908, in gay, busy and pretty St. Pierre, the capital of Martinique, which nestled at the foot of impetuous Mont Pelé and straggled, amphitheater-like, along the amethyst- and lilac-colored bay.

The big hand on the clock of the Military Hospital had just reached seven-forty on the dial. The slowly rising sun, the heat of whose rays was tempered by the tropic trade wind, played a dazzling saraband on the peaked red roofs and yellow façades of the green-shuttered, seventeenth-century houses in the citron-tinted streets. With equal benignity, the sun's rays slanted down upon the spire and dome of the cathedral in the center of the town, upon the roofs of the theater, barracks and club, in the popular Place Bertin, and the Lyceum and Bourse de Commerce, and showered its radiant bounty upon the nodding palms and frondescence of the Jardin des Plantes.

There was much afoot on this day in the beatific valley of the Roxelana, where the well-to-do have their villas, and along the heights of Trois Ponts, as well as in the other sections in the hills.

A French curé, *en grande tenue* (resplendent) in robe and shovel hat, was seen to hurry citywards, for he was late. The Ascension procession was soon to begin. The Curé paused at times, in his rapid gait, to speak to and inspirit a knot of solemn, though ordinarily vivacious, young colored women. They, banana-tinted, straight-forward, and erect as slim palms, were also citybound.

Here and there, a group of girls, with arms and shoulders bare, their flaring, highly starched cambric presenting a chic and jaunty



picture, stopped an abbé on the dusty mountain road leading into the festive city. They were all nervously a-twitter. With their carriage lacking its customary lightness of step and graceful freedom of motion, they turned their bandanna-covered heads toward majestic Mont Pelé and shuffled irresolutely. The abbé reassured them. There was little to fear, he said. This was a day of feasting and gaiety. "Nothing will happen," he asserted. So onward they went, forgetting for the moment that there existed such a menace as Pelé.

They joined a group of russet-tinted *porteuses* who, apparently, had come many miles, from Grande-Anse. These sinewy, scantily clad *porteuses*, or *blanchisseuses* (laundresses), puissant physical types, with an elastic and sinuous step, moved along with statuesque grace, balancing heavy loads of festive goods on their heads. The bare portions of their skin shone brightly in the warming sun, contrasting, yet blending harmoniously with the gaudy, almost

bizarre tone and pattern of their starched cambric and cotton garments.

There was a sparkling exhilaration in the warm but trade-wind-kissed air. The *estaminets* and the *petits cafés*, with their round, marble-topped tables, in the streets, already were doing a thriving business. Despite the early hour, men and women were sipping their morning tonics, and the merchant houses were closed for the holiday. In fine, it was a gay, chattering, gossiping crowd, composed for the main of stalwart men and agile women—colored folk, whose grace and chic must have been borrowed from the French and in whom was commingled the grace of Castile.

Yet, about it all was an undertone of distinct uneasiness, though the townspeople for the moment tried to forget their fear and anxiety as they spun their yarns in assumed bravado. Was it not yesterday that the *soufrière* in St. Vincent had been erupting? It was granted that this morning of the eighth differed little from other mornings, as far as the actions of Mont Pelé (or the bald mountain) was concerned, yet, had there not been signs of volcanic activity a week or two before? On April twenty-eighth, a heavy fall of ashes had occurred, and no later than May second and third, a severe eruption had destroyed many sugar plantations, including the Guerin Estate, north of the capital, taking a toll of more than one hundred and fifty lives.

"Have no fear," expostulated the seemingly better initiated and more optimistic among them. "It is much cry and little wool. The St. Vincent eruption that took place, one hundred miles distant at Soufrière, must have offered relief to our own Pelé, notwithstanding its frequent blasts, more disquietening rumblings and denser ashes. Why, within the knowledge of man, no major eruption of Pelé has ever occurred."

Little did these people realize, as they sat and talked, that, according to eyewitnesses at Morne Rouge, inland, at half past seven of the same morning a thick cloud of smoke had been seen to rise from Pelé that inspired the fear that "*Saint-Pierre était perdue*" ("St. Pierre was lost").

That human optimism knows no bounds is proven by the official statement issued on May the seventh, just one day before the catastrophe, by the scientific commission charged with the study

of volcanic phenomena. These gentlemen stated with great firmness that "no one of the Pelé phenomena showed anything abnormal, unnatural. These paroxysms were absolutely similar to those phenomena occurring with other volcanoes. The crater's open cone was getting wider, so that as time progressed, its mud and smoke and lava flow would seek itself a way out, without the slightest danger of eruptions. Furthermore the position and location of the craters and valleys leading to the sea were of such a nature" that "*la sécurité de Saint-Pierre reste entière*" ("the security of St. Pierre remained entirely assured").

So, their fear and anxiety apparently assuaged, their rippling laughter and delightfully musical French and patois chatter resounding gaily, the colored and white *citoyens* crowded the streets of St. Pierre and nudged around the stalls of the market place that were crammed with tropic fruit, sweets and flowers. In the midst of this glorious blaze of color, they jested and cajoled and made their bold innuendoes, and the men mischievously eyed the shapely and flimsily dressed creole women, whose beauteous movements and exuberantly sensuous histrionics were a byword in this gay and sinful Paris of the West Indies.

In the habitually busy roadstead of the enchanting crescent-shaped bay, where vessels of all nations were wont to gather to pick up cargoes of sugar and produce at harvest time, a British steamer, the "Roddam," had anchored about a quarter of a mile offshore at six o'clock in the morning. Mont Pelé was puffing lightly then, and the rose-covered hills and Calvary and the tropical-verdured uplands, as well as the gay doings in the festive town, as observed from the steamer's deck, were the topics of the seamen's conversation. It was seven-forty-five when the agent of the steamship line came alongside to palaver and to arrange for the discharge and re-loading of cargo on the morrow, when the Fête d'Obligation would be over.

The hands of the clock on the Military Hospital had just reached seven-fifty when, without an instant's warning, a blinding shaft of flame and cloud illumined the scene and, simultaneously, the atmosphere became impregnated with a volcanic dust. Immediately, upon the heels of this phenomena, there was a terrific explosion—a deafening roar, fiercer than a broadside from a thou-

sand cannons. Lofty white pennants of smoke were seen to rise from the volcano's summit; and then, to the accompaniment of terrifying and deafening detonations and thunderings, an avalanche of fiery incandescence, for whose ebullition no words could be found, descended upon the gay city.

Within two minutes, when the dial on the clock of the Military Hospital showed seven-fifty-two, St. Pierre's thirty thousand men and women, its buildings, factories and shops, houses and gardens, were all obliterated by this sudden cataclysm. It took Pelé just two minutes to cover St. Pierre with its deathly shroud of fire.

As to eyewitnesses, except for those on the steamers in the roadstead, there were very few indeed, since all but one of St. Pierre's inhabitants were blotted out in the flaming whirlwind of molten lava and ashes that was accompanied by dense gases which asphyxiated them before they had time to realize what it was all about.

But one witness wrote as follows: "Since early morning the volcano's rumblings had become more disquietening and the discharge of the ashes became blacker. At exactly ten minutes to eight, a tremendous crash, a detonation, resounded throughout the entire colony. . . . An immense mass was seen bursting forth from the crater and hurling itself upward with tremendous dexterity. The black coils of the appalling columns, rent by electric discharges, unrolled, expanded and dissipated . . . and, impelled by an invisible force, moved on. But suddenly, from the midst of these masses, a spout of fire detached itself; it beat down upon St. Pierre like a hurricane, enveloping the entire city as if within the meshes of a horrible net. Everything went down before it. At the same time everything took fire. Deep night fell over the land. . . . Yet it was immediately illuminated by the dread fires of this Inferno, a veritable hell."

The side of the mountain was torn away by the impact of the eruption. The total loss of life at that time was estimated at thirty thousand. The total loss of property, or material losses, was one hundred million francs. And the single survivor, out of more than thirty thousand people, was Joseph Soutout, a colored man, and a convict, who had been incarcerated in a stone dungeon. . . . When released later, having been without water or food for many

days, and with his body covered with burns and blisters, he was found to be out of his mind. . . . He died a couple of days after.

Thus, with but one house on the outskirts left standing, with one survivor out of thirty thousand, and with the clock of the Military Hospital actually halted at seven-fifty-two—a time mark among the ghastly ruins and the only actual recorder of one of the greatest holocausts that the modern world has ever known—St. Pierre, the Pompeii and Herculaneum of the Western World, was blotted out and ceased to exist.

As for the "Roddam," one of the steamers that was anchored in the roadstead, it escaped—but in what a condition! With the roadstead completely shrouded in blackness, and with gas and cinders and fiery blasts of hot air enveloping it, a tidal wave struck the bay with such tremendous force that the "Roddam" careened over, miraculously escaping the fate of capsizing. Then the "Roddam" caught on fire. Already the bay was filled with other burning ships, and it was difficult indeed for Captain Freeman to handle the steamer. Yet, thanks to his heroic maneuvering, the "Roddam" got away, passing the "Roraima" of the Quebec line, which was ablaze from stem to stern. The "Roddam" managed to steer for St. Lucia, where she arrived a terrible sight to behold—deep in ashes, without masts, and with practically all her men and officers dead or so severely burned and injured that they were almost unrecognizable. It was a feat of miraculous skill that the skipper managed to bring her to port. As the story goes—one which has become a heroic epilogue of the tragedy—the captain, since his hands were burned, managed to steer the vessel by holding the spokes of the wheel in the crook of his elbow.

There was another eruption of the volcano on the twentieth day of May, followed by still another one on the thirtieth of August, at which date the final spasms or outbursts took place that, with a tornadic blast similar to the one that destroyed St. Pierre, swept down upon Morne Rouge in less than a minute and also destroyed that gay little city with its 1200 people—all those that had foolishly remained there against orders.

And now St. Pierre exists no more—St. Pierre with its amiable, wealthy and pleasure-loving inhabitants, many of whom were descendants of the old French aristocrats—St. Pierre, so graphically

described in the lucid prose of the master penman, Lafcadio Hearn, in his incomparable travel narrative of Martinique, as "the quaintest, queerest, prettiest of all West Indian cities." Today its ruins, those of a once prosperous town, obliterated, and covered with a gigantic shroud, lie mute and brooding, and are gazed upon by tourists and travelers from near and far. But the rest of Martinique remains—which is something to be thankful for. Today, with St. Pierre obliterated, Martinique's chief city is Fort-de-France, which is united to the first by a road called La Trace, famous historically since it was originally traced, or laid out, along the mountain's ridge by the Carib Indians.

And now, having disposed of the none too pleasant task of giving a description of the cosmic cataclysm that demolished a most minute portion of the island (since only a few miles around the bay have been laid waste), I come to the much more congenial task of describing the rest of the island as I know it. Beginning once more with the early history, I turn again to that intrepid explorer, Columbus, who discovered Martinique on his last voyage to these parts in 1502. It is located thirty miles due south from Dominica, and not much less from Marie Galante. Whence it derived its name it is hard to say, though we do know that the Carib Indians, when Columbus paid them a visit, called it Madiana, so that Martinique may be the French corruption of that word.

There may have been sufficient cause for the gallant voyager's landing at Martinique, for I learned subsequently that, notwithstanding Columbus' advanced age, his curiosity must have been aroused on a previous voyage when he heard that the island had an overwhelming population of women. He would not have been the true Spanish gentleman if he had not given heed to the age-old proverb that he who loves not a beautiful woman must be a miserable wretch indeed. As to how the ancient but gallant voyager fared when he landed, and whether he found the rumor to be true, neither he nor historians have seen fit to record. Since Columbus did not tarry long, but almost immediately set sail again, one is forced to conclude that the rumor was but a canard.

One hundred and fifty years after Columbus' landfall, French adventurers took possession, allowing the Carib, for some reason or other, to remain in undisturbed possession of the woods, glens

and rocky shores. In 1635, the adventurous Norman captain, d'Esnambuc, operating under a charter from Cardinal Richelieu, came down from St. Christopher, or St. Kitts, and made the unforgettable error of founding the city of St. Pierre at the foot of the frowning volcano Pelé—an error which was to cost the lives of thirty thousand people two hundred and eighty years later.

We have no desire to go into the long struggles that ensued here, as elsewhere, with the Caribs. Suffice it to say that the Caribs, in the customary manner of the period, were killed, or slaughtered, or deported, while Negro slaves were brought in in their place. The year 1726 witnessed the establishment of the sugar cane and coffee industry, that made the inhabitants and the shareholders in Paris rich at the expense of the slaves. Nor did Martinique escape the rigors of the titanic struggles for possession and the rivalries between Great Britain and France. It was in the Bay of Fort-de-France that Count de Grasse regrouped his fleet, which was to unite with the ships of the Spaniards off Hispaniola. They captured Jamaica and made a mighty attempt to drive the British tars out of the West Indian realm.

Martinique, as the nucleus of French life and society in all the French West Indies, was deeply affected by the vicissitudes of the French Revolution; and the emancipation of the Haitian slaves caused equal hardships and friction. These circumstances led to many upheavals, all more or less difficult to manage, but the one insurrection that took place in 1831 eventually resulted in the emancipation of the slaves, in 1848, and the inauguration of the contract labor system. As in the British and also the Netherland-West Indian colonies, coolies were now imported from the East Indies. This had become necessary because the liberated colored slaves had abandoned the planters and commenced to work lands of their own, even though they found that being their own bosses was no panacea for their ills.

Ever since slave labor was introduced in the seventeenth century, a large element of creole Negroes and crossbreeds of every tint has been the result. The Martinique crossbreeds differ little from those of the many Negro and mulatto types in the other islands in the Antilles.

Speaking of the inbreeding of the whites and blacks in this con-

nection leads me to relate one event in the history of Martinique that I should not fail to record. It concerns the illustrious Frater, Père Labat, who arrived here on the twenty-ninth of January, 1684, and about whom I have written in many previous pages.

On March 6, 1694, Père Labat officiated at a special church service and, to quote his own words, "We were busy all morning confessing a crew of filibusters who had arrived at Les Mouillages with two prizes that they had captured from the British. The Mass of the Virgin was celebrated with all solemnity and I blessed three large loaves of bread which were presented by the Captain and his officers, who arrived at the Church accompanied by the drums and trumpets of their corvets. At the beginning of Mass the corvets fired a salute with all her cannons. At the elevation of the Holy Sacrament, we fired another salvo, at the Benediction a third, and finally a fourth when we sang the *Te Deum* after Mass. All the filibusters contributed 30 sols to the Sacristy and did so with much piety and modesty."

And further he writes that he "saw nothing but mulattoes in our islands, were it not that the King had imposed a fine of two thousand pounds of sugar if a man was convicted of being the father of one of them. If the father be a master who had debauched his slave, in addition to the fine, both mother and child were confiscated and given to the hospital. . . ." And he said further, "One cannot praise sufficiently the zeal of his Majesty for this ordinance. But it must be permitted the missionaries to say that in seeking to remedy a scandal, the door has been opened to the crime of abortion—now so frequently procured by the women and often enough on the advice of their masters."

The Pères de la Charité, who owned the hospitals, were particularly alert in these cases; and among these Pères, so I read in Labat's "Memoirs," was a certain Père XXX, who was quite talented in nosing out discoveries of this nature. It was true that he was helped by the mistresses of the slaves, who wished to see the child and mother confiscated, and also to take revenge on their straying, amorous husbands.

Yet many were the mix-ups in Court that ensued, and, to quote Père Labat, "I have listened to some of these mix-ups: On one occasion the slave of a settler in one of our parishes alleged that

Père was himself the father of her child. . . . As bad luck would have it," continued Labat, "the unfortunate priest had stayed a night at this settler's home nine or ten months before the birth of the child. He had not failed to remind his colored woman of this fact or instruct her carefully what to say.

"So the result," said Père Labat, "was a most amusing scene in Court when the mother went into minute details to prove that no man had made love to her, except the poor unfortunate priest XXX.

"The Judge tried his best to make her contradict herself, without success, and the woman's evidence remained unshaken. She then held up the colored infant in her arms and presented it to Père XXX, saying '*Toi Papa li*' (Creole French for 'You are its father.'). She compared the child to Père XXX and vowed they were as alike as two drops of water. Père XXX, accustomed as he was to adventures of this kind, was so upset that everyone almost expired laughing. The effrontery of the slave, who looked the picture of injured innocence, the confusion of the Priest, a very good man," Labat wrote, "who was incapable of a like weakness as everyone was well aware, or the exemplary gravity of the Judge, who in spite of all his efforts would have also succumbed. . . . Well, in the end, good Père XXX was exonerated . . . with cause."

And while I am on the subject of slaves I am reminded of the name of a man whose memory is kept alive by a statue now facing the Hôtel de Ville in Fort-de-France. I refer to Victor Schoelcher, who was the true benefactor of the slaves, and who has done more than any other for the French slave's emancipation. Two years after the outbreak of France's revolution, in 1794, slavery was abolished by the Convention in all French colonies but, since it was re-established again by Napoleon, the slaves found their greatest champion in Schoelcher, who left nothing undone to secure the end of this infamous and inhuman system, and in whose honor a village on Martinique's coast, one of the streets in Fort-de-France, a library and a museum have been named. Travelers to Fort-de-France will surely remember the beautiful statue, erected amid the sentinel palms of the mango and the sand-box trees that line the Savanna, and depicting Schoelcher in the act of shielding a slave girl, garbed in her characteristic national costume. . . .

Properly speaking, Fort-de-France, since St. Pierre's demolition, is today the center and focus of Martinique and French West Indian affairs—the headquarters of the French navy in the West Indies, complete with garrison, naval arsenal and extensive dock-yards. It stands at the entrance of the magnificent bay of Fort-de-France, on the north shore, between two rivers, uniquely called the *Rivière Madame* and the *Rivière Monsieur*. It was from this bay that De Grasse sailed forth to receive a most painful licking at the hands of Admiral Rodney.



Aside from the imposing military appearance of the place, which might be said to be characteristic of many French colonies, it is not of great intrinsic value, since these possessions lie too far off the trade routes to become important economically.

I should record here that Martinique, while possibly not so majestic in appearance as many of the other French islands, or as wild and awe-inspiring as Dominica or Guadeloupe in its grandeur, yet, upon closer acquaintance, was pleasantly luxuriant and green, while the view beheld from the deck of our steamer was intensely alluring.

Fort-de-France has a delightful resemblance to a French provincial town, what with the Gothic cathedral's fretted spire in the center, the dome of the library, named after Schoelcher, its towering royal palms, the Savanna, the town's principal park, together with the quaint little houses with their green shutters and welcoming verandas, the nice little streets, with blue-enameled lettered signs, and the *estaminets* where *citoyens* gather to sip their *apéritifs*. Its beautiful highways wind through the wondrous scenery af-

forded by the mountains and valleys and fields and forests. And even the coaches look utterly provincial as they make their treks to even more picturesque Grande Anse, whose *blanchisseuses* are as comely as of yore, and where black sands (containing possibly 90% of natural steel, and giving the beach an appearance almost like that of charcoal) seem to be another of the natural phenomena of this earth.

All the natural beauty of this queenly island, together with its conglomerate people, in whom the French ardor of soul has so strangely commingled with the native blood of the tropics, form part and parcel of a homogeneous whole that makes Martinique, or the "pays de Revenants" (the land of the Returners), as it is called, one of the most intriguing of all the French West Indies.

The true Mecca, the *pièce de résistance* of one's visit to Fort-de-France (at least for many, and especially for those who are worshipers of *le Petit Caporal*) is, of course, the handsome statue of Martinique's famous daughter, the Empress Josephine, whose beautiful head, carved in marble, stands in the center of the royal palm-shaded broad savanna, and tilts towards Trois Islets, the immortal Creole woman's birthplace, across the pretty bay.

Marie Joseph Rose Tascher de la Pagerie, the fair Creole woman who was destined to become the Empress Josephine, was born on June 25, 1763, into an ancient aristocratic family which possessed estates of no limited extent. Her father, who was representing his family as overseer of a sugar plantation, had been living with his wife and children in a handsome mansion for some time following his marriage. Shortly before Josephine's birth, the mansion was destroyed by hurricane and fire, and her parents were obliged to seek shelter in one of the numerous Negro hovels erected on the property. It was this circumstance that gave rise to the story that "her early life was spent in poverty, in a hovel of rough unhewn stone, thatched with leaves of palm and plantain, in squalor and social insignificance."

Her father, Joseph Gaspard de Tascher de la Pagerie, a decayed scion of the French nobility, was an artillery officer at the time of the Seven Years' War of 1756 and, due to his marriage with a Creole, Josephine was born of mixed blood.

At sixteen she went to France to marry the son of the governor

of Martinique, Marquis de Beauharnais, and after that most unhappy union was dissolved, she returned to her home in the tropics, where lived, at the same time, Françoise d'Aubigné who was to become Madame de Maintenon, also of Napoleonic fame. Josephine remained in Martinique two years, but in 1790, having become reconciled with the Vicomte de Beauharnais, she rejoined him in Paris and remained with him until his head dropped in the basket, during the *Terreur*. She herself narrowly escaped a similar fate.

It was during this period, in her maturer years, that she found favor in the sight of Napoleon. As can be appreciated, she was the constant pride of the folks home (who were wont to call her *le Petit Caporal*, or, the little corporal), just as Napoleon in those days had captivated the hearts of the Parisian people.

At this time, Josephine de Beauharnais was living in Paris and, having been widowed when her husband fell a victim of revolutionary fury, she was faced with the support of her two children, Eugène and Hortense. However, she had managed to save enough from the wreck of her small fortune so that she could live comfortably, if not too extravagantly. As to how she came to the attention of Napoleon, happened in the following manner:

Napoleon, obedient to the orders of the Convention, whose servant he was, had disarmed the populace of Paris, and it was thus that Beauharnais' sword was taken from him, before he died on the scaffold. A number of days later, Eugène, the very intelligent twelve-year-old son of Josephine, managed to gain access to Napoleon and begged him to let him have the sword of his father. Napoleon had no heart to deny the child's request, and he sent for the sword. The child, pressing the sword to his bosom, bowed and silently retreated.

This made such an impression upon Napoleon that he became interested in the Beauharnais family, especially after Josephine, having learned of the "little General's" kind deed, called on him the next day to express to him the gratitude of her family and herself. Her peculiarly sonorous, sweet voice, the pathetic figure she made dressed in mourning, and her tender mission, could not fail to incite Napoleon's admiration. This admiration bloomed into something stronger, and though at first she offered a steadfast

resistance to Napoleon's advances, she finally accepted him, upon the urgent advice of Barras, one of the five members of the *Directoire*, and one of Napoleon's warmest friends.

To quote one or two lines of a letter she then wrote to friends: "I am urged to marry again. My friends counsel the measure. You have met General Bonaparte, at my house. He it is who would supply a father's place to the orphans of Alexandre Beauharnais, a husband to his widow. I admire the General's courage." And further she writes: "But I confess that I shrink from the despotism he seems desirous of exercising over all who approach him."

Whatever were Josephine's objections, and they were not without foundation and reason, Napoleon and Josephine were married on March 6, 1796, he being then twenty-six years of age. Theirs became a union of affection, since she loved him as much as he admired her, and he paid her great homage. Yet it was but a partnership that, according to Napoleon's precepts or doctrines, if I might use that word, could be dissolved at will, since, so Napoleon reasoned, the Revolutionary Tribunal had closed the churches, banished the clergy and practically dethroned God. Thus, all that he considered necessary for the wedding was a simple record in the State Register—an unpretentious civil ceremony, in other words, with a couple of friends to act as witnesses. This ceremony was followed by a private marriage, occurring at the time when he was crowned Emperor, and performed in accordance with the tenets of the church by Cardinal Fesch. There is no use denying, however, that both Napoleon and Josephine disapproved thoroughly of giving to so sacred an institution as marriage a worldly aspect.

The rest we know. Political motives resulted in Napoleon's divorcing the woman he loved so tenderly, and she, fortunately for herself, was spared the dark, gloomy days of his misfortunes. As Napoleon wrote: "After her forcible separation from me she avowed, in most feeling terms, her ardent desire to share with me my exile, and extolled, with many tears, both myself and my conduct of her." Napoleon displayed, always, even after their unhappy divorce, and until the fine woman's untimely death, a delicacy of attention and devotion toward Josephine, the only woman he loved.

Readers undoubtedly know what prompted Napoleon's divorce. His political satellites considered it requisite that Napoleon's line of inheritance should be clearly established, so that there should not be any trouble arising after his death. Personal feelings naturally also entered into this situation, since it had been known for quite some time that Napoleon was unable to obtain a lawful heir with her.

The fateful day arrived. It was in November of the year 1809 that Napoleon went to Fontainebleau to visit his wife, pale as death, and in a highly nervous state, and spoke the fateful, soul-rending words: "Josephine, my destiny is stronger than my will. My dearest affections must yield to the welfare of France." Josephine, unable to stand the cruel blow, fell to the palace floor in a deathly swoon.

On December 15, 1809, the Grand Salon of the Tuilleries witnessed the macabre scene that publicly dissolved the otherwise so happy union. Again history records Napoleon's words: "For political interests of the Monarch and the wishes of the people, require that I should transmit to an heir, etc., etc." Napoleon, fondly embracing Josephine, accompanied her to her own apartment, where he left her in a state bordering on utter collapse.

The next day she affixed her signature to the fateful document and held her last private interview, lasting for an hour, with Napoleon. . . . The palace of Malmaison, the scene of their happiest days, together with a jointure of six hundred thousand dollars a year and the retention of the title of Empress, were all that remained for her as a memory of the dulcet days.

It was then that Napoleon married Marie Louise, who, on the nineteenth of March, gave birth to a son, the King of Rome.

When Josephine's dying hour arrived, she begged for a portrait of the man she loved, and, staring long and tenderly at it, she spoke the following words: "Le Bon Dieu garde Napoleon, durant son existence dans le Desert du Monde ('God watch over Napoleon, while he remains in the desert of this world')." Barely four weeks after his arrival at Elba, on the ninth of May, Josephine died.

Her body lies entombed in the quaint and old village of the Church of Ruel, a couple of miles away from Malmaison, in a

white-marbled mausoleum. The mausoleum represents the Empress on her knees, in her coronation robes. It bears the simple epitaph:

Eugène and Hortense
to
Josephine

They have never forgotten her, and her kindness, for Josephine, the Imperial Creole, so often interceded for, and was solicitous of, the welfare of her people. . . . They erected a statue to her everlasting memory, where it now looks down benignly upon Martiniqueans of today. . . .

And so, Fort-de-France, with its statues of Josephine and Schoelcher, both benefactors of the blacks and creoles in their own way, has now for many years been the capital, and is the *medulla oblongata* of French West India. But no longer is it what it was when Lafcadio Hearn, with that true and understanding feeling, wrote so brilliantly of its Franco-Africaine, in a manner that only he knew how. For the Frenchman, who has come to consider this his country with amazing facility, has found that his natural energy replenishes itself admirably in these tropics, with the frequent assistance of *apéritifs* and *bon vin*, and he has made of the island of Martinique an enchanting admixture of tradition both centuries old and new.

Santa Lucia

THE CATSPA W





WHEN CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, on evidence culled from ancient writers of the probability of a route to Cipango and the land of the Gran Khan of which Marco Polo spoke, first sighted the islet that he believed to be the Asiatic mainland and not very far from the domain of the Khan, he could not have foreseen that actually he was setting the stage upon which for the next three hundred and fifty years there would be fought the battles that would determine world power and supremacy. For many hundreds of years these, and even our own, shores were to be colored with the blood of the soldiers and sailors of these wars and broils of Old World rivalries and pettinesses.

Even the most myopic of scientific or would-be historians will

have to admit that the problems of navigation and of colonization stood in the front rank of all these embroglios for which not only the Spaniards and the Dutch but also the British, the French and others have stained these Caribbean waters with their life-blood. Behind it all hung the crimson curtain of greed, rivalry and international jealousy which was the shifting panorama for the scenes of Old and New World diplomacy and lust for power and material development.

St. Lucia, often called "The Faithful" for reasons I shall later disclose, and to which our steamer was headed after leaving Martinique, could actually be called the cockpit of the French and British warring maneuvers. The many battles that were fought around her—and, in consequence, the resultant constantly changing flags—gave the Santa Lucians, like the people of many of the other islands, no little confusion in remembering to which country they had last sworn allegiance. With France and Great Britain continually contending for this so-enchanted isle, its fate often reminds one of the story of Homer, in which Greek and Trojan went to bat for the possession of the Fair Helen of Troy. That is why of all the islands in the American Mediterranean, Fair Helen, or the island of St. Lucia, must seem the most interesting to the student of history and the lovers of a good scrap, and to those also that delight in the narratives of battles fought on land or on sea. Here old Blighty was arrayed in arms against all the world. Here, also, Admiral Rodney, who was the most profound believer in the theory that St. Lucia was the key to the Lesser Antilles, fought his brilliant battle often called the "Battle of the Saints." It was here also that Comte d'Estaing, the Marquis de Bouille and the Marquis de Grasse suffered defeat. Yet, so often as it was wrested from the French just so often the British had to give it back. In the end, however, Rodney's victory at the Battle of the Saints delivered the colony for good from the French and resulted in securing for him (and *for his heirs*) a pension of two thousand pounds a year, the honor of sitting for Sir Joshua Reynolds for his portrait, elevation to the peerage, and the distinction of having his bones placed in a tomb beside the rest of England's immortals, with a monument erected to his honor in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Curiously enough, while it was Rodney's victory here that termi-

nated the embroglio and ensured England's possessions in the West Indies, St. Lucia was the only one which was restored to France by the Treaty of Versailles. However, this was not to be of long endurance, for in the year 1796, thanks to Ralph Abercromby, the colony was restored to Britain who has retained it to this day.

Though many ancient travelers made reference in their writings to an island that is now identifiable as St. Lucia, I believe that it was, again, that mariner, Columbus, who in 1502 first spoke of it by that name. In subsequent years, or, to be exact, for one hundred and three years, it was left to the Caribs until the English ship, the "Olive Blossom," arrived in 1605 at the neighboring island, Barbados. Her master, Captain Cataline, taking a keen interest in St. Lucia, took possession of this isle in the name of King James I. Setting sail again, for the protection of the flag he left a number of colonists with dunnage and stores with which the Caribs soon made short shift. Few colonists escaped with their lives from the massacre to neighboring islands.

Kings in those days were extremely generous in giving away lands and deeds that did not belong to them, so St. Lucia likewise was included, in 1627, in a most sweeping act of generosity or grant on the part of Charles I to the Earl of Carlisle. This worthy's attempt at settlement, however, showed negative results. Not to be outdone by his English contemporary in the granting of royal presents, the King of France—and Cardinal Richelieu from behind the scenes—played Santa Claus with no less magnanimity and bestowed a grant to les Messieurs Latine and Du Plessis which included all of the unoccupied lands in this hemisphere. These two gentlemen picked upon Martinique as their place of abode, wisely resolving that it was the healthiest part of discretion to leave St. Lucia to the Caribs, for the time being. The British, calmly ignoring the right of the Frenchmen and acting on the presumption of their priority in colonization, swooped down, or, more correctly, swooped up the slopes of St. Lucia. Lord Willoughby officially planted the British flag upon this island, waving aside the claims of the others as well as ignoring the remonstrances of the Caribs. It may be noted, though obviously, that the new colonists had little time left for their planting since they were kept busy in fighting off the Caribs, who had been stirred up against them by the canny

French of Martinique. As a matter of historical fact, those that were not massacred were glad to leave the island in a hurry and, what is worse, in their terrific but understandable haste they forgot their accumulated stores and dunnage.

But meanwhile French influence in these parts had been growing, and when the British prestige had greatly weakened in other parts of the area, the French King, with that well-known generosity, in 1842 assumed sovereignty over St. Lucia. This time the royal smile of patronage beamed upon the French West India Company, and this trading outfit "received" not only this but all His Majesty's other possessions in the fair Caribbean and the Americas.

So St. Lucia was fought over and taken and given away, once more the catspaw between Britain and France. To add to the "tumult and the shouting," the Caribs too did their little bit by massacring right and left at the slightest opportunity and with the most cheerful disregard to color and flags. At their wits' end, the British and the French put their worried heads together and concluded a treaty with the Caribs—and a curious one it was! It stipulated that the Caribs were to behave themselves like good boys and confine their mischief, as well as their fleshpots, to St. Vincent and Dominica, but that they relinquish any claim to the Lesser Antilles. This one-sided treaty (one-sided because it made the Caribs give up almost everything, while the wily white men kindly agreed to cede to them what they, the Caribs, had always owned) was, as could be expected, quickly ignored. Warfare ensued between Britain and France that continued almost without cessation for the next hundred and sixty years. It became a regular and monotonous give-and-take affair until, in 1748, it was agreed to consider it neutral ground and both powers withdrew from the island. In 1756, however, the French and the British went to bat again until, by the Treaty of Paris, a division was made of the neutral islands and it reverted back to the French. Two years after our own independence, Admiral Rodney, after an absence of months spent in England where he had some mighty explaining to do to his Parliament on numberless charges (referred to in the Statia chapter), came back with the fate of the British in his hands. In December, 1778, England's vessels entered the bay at Grand Cul-de-Sac, and somewhat later, in the year 1779, a nice little

battle was fought at the Vigie, a fortress in Castries Harbor. It was a carnage that resulted in most bloody fighting in which both sides put up an heroic scrap. The French were defeated and the Comte d'Estaing, who seemed to have had more than enough of the battle, left St. Lucia to its fate. Under British possession, the island was fortified to such an extent that it actually became the cockpit from which great battles were undertaken under Rodney, Hood, Moore and Abercromby. From St. Lucia, the British pounced upon the Dutch and the French, and even the Spanish, hunting them out in every nook and cranny of the Caribbean. There ensued one of the greatest naval battles ever fought. On April 12, 1782, Rodney and Samuel Hood, and also Admiral Drake—a kinsman of Sir Francis—left their Castries Harbor eyrie and overtook the French squadrons of Comte de Grasse somewhere between Guadeloupe and Dominica. They gave de Grasse an awful licking, almost annihilating the fleet, capturing the flagship "Ville de Paris" (a present from the City of Paris to Louis XV), and making the French Admiral their prisoner. This encounter became known as the Battle of the Saints. English possessions in the Caribbean were saved. France's naval power suffered so staggering a blow that it ruined her. England dictated her own terms, yet strangely enough she lost St. Lucia as well as her thirteen American Colonies.

All went well with the islands until the year 1792, which was the fuse that exploded the barrel of gunpowder. The Directoire had appointed the associate of Robespierre and Marat, *Citoyen-Genéral* Ricord, as governor of St. Lucia. The ferocious *Citoyen* Victor Hugues of whom I have already spoken was also the indirect cause of much slaughter and bloodshed among the slaves. These, intoxicated by their newly given freedom brought about by Ricord's abolishment of slavery on the 4th of February, 1794, started on a veritable carousal of terror. In the name of Liberté, Egalité and Fraternité, they filled to overflowing the Santa Lucian gutters with Santa Lucian blood. Sixty-nine years before our own Lincoln emancipated the slaves here, the Negro slaves jubilantly celebrated their liberation on St. Lucia. But their dearly won freedom did not last long, for two years later Prince Edward, the Duke of Kent, once more hoisted the Union Jack over the island. It was

obviously to be expected that the British would regard the *inhuman* Ricord's very *human* document as merely a scrap of paper. The island became French again when *Citoyen* Goyraud made a surprise attack, and remained French until the advent of Sir Ralph Abercromby who, with twelve thousand men, attacked the two thousand Frenchmen under Goyraud who had thought themselves safe and protected in Morne Fortune, overlooking the Bay. After many scraps in which the Republican forces, helped by desperately fighting Negroes, put up a brave fight, it was taken in possession by the British Commander, Sir John Moore, and the old order of slavery was re-established.

Even Bonaparte had something to do with the island. By the Treaty of Amiens in 1802, St. Lucia was returned to France and Admiral Villaret hoisted the Tricolor of the Republic de France—with disastrous results to the slaves. This brings me to the memorable date of June 10th, 1803, when again the flare was lit that made the Caribbean the battleground in which St. Lucia, like Belgium in the European wars, bore the brunt of the carnage. The French, under General Nogues, held Morne Fortune which Commodore Hood, who had come from Barbados, re-took after a great battle. This battle terminated St. Lucia's stormy career of a hundred and fifty years of sanguinary warfare. It became now a British colony once more and it has remained so until the present day.

Such has been the bloody history of an island, so delightful and so charmingly French in character, that now bulks importantly in the Caribbean domain of Great Britain.

By virtue of its mountainous aspect, it is of great contrast to the configuration of low-lying Barbados. It surprised me, knowing its history, how it had been at all possible for soldiers to have taken the fortress from such a height. Because its harbor is narrow it is easy to see that it was open to continual attacks from the forts of adjacent hills, including that of historical Morne Fortune. These pinnacles, like watch-dogs, stand guard over beautiful Castries Bay. Long before our steamer rounded the northwest shore of the island (which is oval in form, with a length of forty-two miles and a width of twenty-one miles) two summits—conical sugar loaves, or *Pitons*, as the French call them—"Grande" and "Petit," rose awesomely from the dark blue waters of Soufrière

Bay to a height of possibly two thousand eight hundred feet. These misshapen towers (or donkey ears, as they are called by the seamen) of some vast, submerged volcanic era are garbed in bright green and presented a sight, as our steamer approached, of incomparable and overwhelming grandeur.

At the northern end of the island and beyond the narrow promontory off the entrance to Gros Ilet Bay, is Pigeon Island, or Pigeon Rock, which is said to have been the place from which Admiral Rodney must have impatiently awaited the signal that De Grasse had left Fort Royal Bay. In the distance of this succession of peaks and promontories, of gentle slope and steep acclivity, loomed the somber outline of the Soufrière, a huge volcano. In this Soufrière, the lava boils while its inexhaustible sulphurous vapors issue from it periodically and act as a none-too-gentle reminder that the volcano is still active, and that it has been since time immemorial. Yet it also gives the reason why St. Lucia's soil—because of that ancient lava stream and decomposed vegetation—is so exceedingly rich. It soon became apparent, as our ship wound its way into the magnificent landlocked Bay of Castries, why the nations had fought for centuries for the possession of this beautiful prize. Quite apart from its value as Britain's coaling station, St. Lucia presented an enchanting picture of beauty.

From a place of vantage, standing at the crest of Morne Fortune, new vistas are opened wherever the eye turns. Far below, we beheld neighboring Martinique rising out of the sea, the adjacent peaks of the unforgettable precipitous *Pitons* looking out of the filmy veil of mist, and Castries' harbor life in Carlisle Bay. This latter does full justice to the colony's boast that it is a safe harbor for ships, for, once seen, one soon becomes convinced of that proud statement. The harbor was named in honor of a French Colonial Minister, Marechal de Castries. There are still the ruins of barracks to be seen that offer contrast to the gay bougainvillea-covered slopes of the Morne Fortune where St. Lucia's well-to-do reside. Here a monument has been erected as a grim reminder of those hectic and bloody days, and as a commemoration of the event at which the then Prince Edward, Duke of Kent—the great-great-grandfather of the present British King—with his own hands hoisted the Union Jack over St. Lucia's Morne Fortune.

St. Vincent
AND BREADFRUIT BLIGH





ST. VINCENT W. SIDE.

THERE ARE VERY FEW OF US WHO have not read or seen (in the cinema) that epic of adventure, "Mutiny on the Bounty," and even fewer who have not marveled at the Odyssey of Bligh. In 1793, he carried in his ship, the "Providence," three hundred breadfruit trees from the islands of the South Pacific to St. Vincent's Botanical Garden. The full-grown progenies of these trees are now thriving in all their beauty in this cradle of tropical agriculture. Thus it was through Bligh that the breadfruit tree, possibly the first of its kind in this hemisphere, was introduced into the Botanical Garden of flower-like St. Vincent, which had been established some thirty years before, and where plants of every and any tropical importance are grown. Actually, the transplantation was fostered by West Indian planters, who visualized in this staff-of-life of the South Sea Islanders a medium by means of which they hoped to supplement the supply of an economical food for the many hungry mouths on their sugar plantations.

The climate of the Caribbean lands was admirably suited to its propagation, so that the breadfruit, since its Caribbean debut, has thrived here as vigorously as in its *habitat natalis*. Curious to relate, however, it has fallen far short of the purpose for which it was imported, and it has not lived up to the high expectations held of it, since the natives have never become particularly enamored of its

somewhat insipid and sweetish taste. Captain Bligh was well rewarded for his part in the undertaking, for he received a thousand-pound check from the enthusiastic planters, not to mention a secure place in history's annals. But the breadfruit, which thrives in many of the neighboring islands, and which has become known as the *vera causa* for much adventure, hardship and disaster, has definitely failed in its primary purpose—that of replacing the old reliable staff of life, flour.

I have seen thousands upon thousands of specimens of this South Sea immigrant, the breadfruit tree, in neighboring St. Lucia, in St. Vincent and Jamaica (which ought to attest, in a minor way, to an acquired taste among the natives). The tree grows to a height of fifty feet. It has a shapely trunk, with branches many feet above the ground, whose bows are thickly covered with broad, glossy leaves of a dark green, some of which reach from ten to fifteen inches in length. The fruit, which naturally attracted me, as it would anyone acquainted with its history, is oval, or nearly round, when ripe. Better still, to be more exact, it is the size of a child's head; and it is encased in a rough kind of rind characterized by lozenge-shaped coverings somewhat like those on a pineapple. Bright green when young, the fruit becomes a deep yellow when fully ripe. When overripe, its watery, yellowish, spongy pulp is extremely unpalatable, though, in its mealy state, it resembles the taste of fresh bread.

It is easy to understand why the breadfruit has become the *pièce de résistance* in the South Sea native's daily repast. Obviously, it serves the very purpose that a languorous nature intended. It produces two or three crops a year, just as it does today in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Its edible pulp may be harvested from six to nine months of the year. Its cooked fruit will keep for weeks, which is an important factor in tropical countries. From the fiber of the inner bark, a coarse but very serviceable cloth is made; its gum is used to calk native boats; and even its wood, that takes on, when seasoned, a sort of rich mahogany color, is widely used.

There are many ways in which the breadfruit is utilized in the colored man's diet. For instance, to give it its due, when properly baked and roasted it is nutritious, though still somewhat insipid

and sweetish to the palate. It is also used as a vegetable, and I have found it not bad in that role. When it is boiled and served with butter it tastes, to me at least, like a potato. And I remember now, as I write these lines, that at one time during my visit I had some fried plantains served to me simultaneously with breadfruit *frites*, and both tasted about the same.

But for the life of me, I could never see why people labored under the impression that the breadfruit would take the place of bread, although I can readily see the planters' justification for this hope. They thought that the cultivation of breadfruit would alleviate or reduce the importation of flour and other costly foodstuffs, but they were extremely disappointed with the experiment, since the natives balked at the breadfruit, and the importation of flour resumed the same large proportions.

However, with Whittier I would say, "Light is mingled with the gloom." For the breadfruit tree has one redeeming feature. This became evident as we drove through the lovely island, where the breadfruit trees in bloom are a most pleasing sight to behold. The rich and varied shades of the blooms contrast delightfully and sharply with the mellow brown hue of the fruit itself, and the trees, in their wealth of foliage, practically enfold and lend shadow to the neat and brightly painted houses along the road, as well as provide a much-needed umbrage to man and beast against the heat of the day.

The historic Botanic Garden which, besides the descendants of Bligh's famous breadfruit, houses other tropicals (originally all immigrants from the South Sea regions and Malaya), stands on the outskirts of Kingstown, the capital of this dreamy isle, within perhaps a mile of the town. Strange as it may seem, almost every plant that travelers will meet with while sojourning in the Caribbean had its origin in the East or in the South Sea. Hence, we encounter the sugar cane, whose *habitat natalis* was the East Indies; pepper, cinnamon, clove and allspice, originally confined to the spice islands, Banda, Halmahera and Moluccas; cocoa pods from Java and the southern parts of the Americas; and such plants as the rubber, mango and vanilla, cotton, arrowroot and many others. Even more interesting should be the fact that the Cinchona, whose bark, when gone through many processes, provides quinine, and

which was originally and exclusively grown in South America, was transplanted to Java, where it did well and has become a monopoly ever since.

My visit to the St. Vincent's Botanical Garden left me with an impression like the one obtained during my many visits to Trinidad. I had spent a goodly portion of the day at the garden when it began to get dark. However, this did not hasten me, since I wanted to gulp in every bit of the beauty that awaits one at dusk.

The sun had vanished behind the mountains. Twilight was short, and evening began to fall gently on the rich maze of tropical foliage, while the first night birds, quicker than the rest, began to cry out conversationally. Crickets and frogs chirped and croaked in high-pitched unending treble, and there were mysterious noises in the shrubs and woodlands that surrounded the garden. The mitigating spice-laden breeze was gently ruffling palm and tree fronds, and the scents of numberless fragrant species of all sorts, and of exotic flowers, stole softly over the senses like the wafting of a zephyr over mountains, glens and dales.

During the day the garden had glowed with a radiance that lent it an air of enchantment, and now, at this mystic moment of short gloaming, the fireflies and firebeetles began to appear in myriads, and the scene became a never-to-be-forgotten one. For every tree and tree bole, every shrub, every blade of grass, came aglow with many sparkles, winking in and out with bewildering numerousness. The magnifying effect of these tiny insects beneath and above the bushes was so intense that at moments I believed that they were numberless little lighted lamps. Everything scintillated with these myriads of little phosphorescent flies and beetles, and the sight was so engrossing that it kept me in the garden for more than an hour after sundown.

I have no idea how many different species of fireflies and phosphorescent beetles there are in this nature of ours, but I discovered, while perusing a book on entymology, that their light comes from a pair of oval spots on the front portion of the thorax. . . . I read further that both male and female emit the light, quite unlike the ordinary glowworm varieties.

When I had had my fill, I left the garden and followed the road back to Kingstown. As a parting greeting, the crickets, frogs and

other strange denizens croaked, chirped and bellowed their interminable nocturnal uproar. Fantastic shadows seemed to blend with the indescribable figures that flitted by in ghostly fashion in the purplish dusk. And 'way above was the first quarter of a new moon, while, as a farewell ode, came the swish of palm fronds and tree tops, swinging softly in the light gusts of the trade wind.

At one time in its history, more than a hundred years ago, when there were almost twenty thousand slaves on the island to do the planter's bidding, St. Vincent's staple was sugar, and the planters waxed fat on the profits. Today, sugar has been replaced by arrowroot, along with cotton, which has also become an important staple. Arrowroot, when properly treated, yields a starchy powder that is used as a food, as well as in the laundry and in the manufacture of chocolate and biscuits.

The Emancipation Act of 1834 was mainly responsible for the divorcement of sugar from the island, and, though the Imperial Government granted compensation to the owners of the slaves, the sugar industry was doomed. Dry rot and decay set in, and St. Vincent, like many of the other Caribbean islands, fell back at that period from her advanced position among sugar-producing communities. The well-to-do planters sold their estates and returned to the old country, which was something they had hoped to do some day anyway. But the poor planters, who were forced to remain against their wishes, found themselves handicapped due to the lack of labor. The emancipated or freed slaves, as might be expected, refused to work for their former masters. Labor difficulties set in. The sugar mills stopped work. Fields that were once a delight to look at lay unplanted, and became ridden with parasitical plants. Not even the introduction of Indian coolies could solve or even ameliorate the difficulty.

But nature, as always, is kind in the end. Arrowroot and cotton bountifully replaced sugar, for which St. Vincent may thank its climate, which is almost as perfect as any tropic climate may hope to be. Indeed, St. Vincent is an island of perpetual sunshine and blue skies, and while the heat of day, as in all tropical lands, is somewhat oppressive, it is always tempered by the cool trade

winds. When the sun has gone to rest, the evenings and nights are often cool and refreshing.

Now to return for a moment to the historical background of St. Vincent, since its discovery in 1498 by Christopher Columbus. From its earliest days, the island had been a stronghold of the Caribs, whose antipathy to the whites made colonizing an extremely risky affair. Hence it was a land without a country, so to speak, until it was declared officially neutral by the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle in 1748. Thereafter, both France and England vied for possession of the fair island, which kept changing lovers, as it were, with disconcerting frequency.

It was captured in 1762 by the British. Then the omnipresent Caribs made trouble again, but were quickly subdued. Subsequently it reverted for a short period to the French until it was restored to England again by the Treaty of Versailles in 1783. During the next few years it almost seemed that the island was finally settling down to the enjoyment of perpetual peace. Then the reign of revolutionary terror surged over from France. It struck in Martinique in 1789 and quickly engulfed St. Lucia, Grenada and St. Vincent within its turbulent compass. Our now familiar friend, Victor Hugues, the Convention's cruel emissary, did not take long to unfurl his banner and, emboldened by the excesses committed at Guadeloupe in 1794, and finding the blood-thirsty Caribs most receptive, swooped down upon St. Vincent and left carnage, destruction and indescribable barbarity in his bloody wake.

But there was still James Seton, the Governor of St. Vincent, to be reckoned with. Equipped with a scanty lot of colonial militia, and reinforced by a handful of Royal American soldiers, he put up such a heroic battle that for the ensuing fifteen months a see-saw war ensued between the defenders and the brigands, that culminated in the subjection of the French by Abercromby. The unrelenting Caribs, however, continued the fracas for some time thereafter, until Major Alexander Leith slew Chatoyer, an enlightened Carib chief. This practically finished the Caribs, who were thereupon deported to the island of Balliceaux and to Ruatan, off Honduras. Here their intermixing with the Negro resulted in that strange ethnologic curiosity, Caribes Noirs, the black

Caraibes, still on display for the edification of tourists. It may be of interest to know that, in the Cathedral of St. George, in Kingstown proper, a tablet has been inscribed to the memory of Major Alexander Leith.

One must conclude that St. Vincent's early days, historically speaking, like those of the other Caribbee islands, did not resemble a bed of roses. Yet St. Vincent has survived and emerged out of all this mess with much more than its honor. It is a separate colony today, though grouped with the Grenadines, St. Lucia and Grenada, and known as one of the Windward Islands. It has its own administrator, while the governor, who is the ruling head of this British isle, resides in St. Lucia.

Because of the past activity of its volcano, the Soufrière, located at the extreme north of the island, St. Vincent, as I have already remarked, boasts a soil of the greatest natural fertility which has yielded bountiful crops of sugar cane, cotton and arrowroot. Still, not unlike neighboring Martinique, the island has suffered greatly at one time in its earlier history from a series of severe eruptions.

One of these eruptions occurred without warning in 1812, and the molten lava laid the island practically waste, destroying not only every vestige of vegetation but killing Negro and Carib natives besides. This, however, was not the first time that the Soufrière had reared its ugly head. Upon perusing the interesting records of Baron Humboldt, I find that the Soufrière, which was at that time part of the Morne Garou mountain chain, erupted in 1718, wreaking a vast and cruel destruction. But not unlike all other volcanic eruptions, that of the Soufrière, when that mountain began to behave again, entailed certain blessings which somewhat outweighed its bloodthirstiness. For the rain of its ashes and lava converted the island into one great bed of fertility, while its crater lake became a most popular place for outings and picnics.

After 1718 the Soufrière lay dormant until the year 1902, when it roused again and burst forth in destructive rage similar to that of Mont Pelé in nearby Martinique.

The phenomena of volcanic eruptions are sufficiently startling to warrant a brief description of some of their outstanding characteristics. Geologists tell us that volcanoes usually have three well-

marked phases of activity: The first is a state of permanent eruption, which is considered not dangerous at all, since the continually escaping steam is supposed to function as a safety valve. This safety valve hypothesis is what originally must have deceived the people of Martinique and St. Vincent. The second stage is one of milder activity. This is accompanied by occasional violent eruptions, which tend to prove that the safety valve is out of order. The third phase is the dangerous one, because, in this instance, eruptions of intense magnitude and extreme violence suddenly terminate long periods of repose, periods of time lasting for centuries, as in the case of the Kloet in volcanic Java, or the case of the Soufrière in St. Vincent, where ninety years had elapsed before the fatal eruption of 1902. Eruptions of this type will cause widespread destruction because, in the third phase, the safety valve has failed to operate and the boiler just has to burst.

Such are the general characteristics of the activities of the vast powers that dwell beneath our earth's surface. While they may be harmless in some cases, they are frightfully perilous in others.

My own personal observations have included the ravages that these earthquakes bring. I witnessed one or two in the East Indies, and I happened to arrive, on one of my trips to Japan, immediately following the great earthquake that took place there in September, 1923, Tokyo and Yokohama having just been laid in ashes when I disembarked from the Canadian Pacific liner.

While on the subject of volcanoes, I am reminded of a legend which men are wont to relate and even believe in: It was held that one of the volcanoes in the Mediterranean, located on a small island of the Lipari group, was the workshop of Vulcan, the God of Fire. Here, in the depths of the earth, Vulcan was supposed to busy himself with forging the thunderbolts used by the gods in their mad furies. The fierce rumblings of the volcano were taken to be the sounds of Vulcan's mighty hammer on his anvil, and the black smoke that issued through the mountain vent was said to arise from the fires of Vulcan's forge.

As to the people of St. Vincent, where the Soufrière had remained dormant for ninety years, they had begun to feel some uneasiness over that mountain's suspicious conduct before it erupted, with catastrophic results, in 1902. To add cause to their

fears there were reports of the ominous behavior of Mont Pelé. Their fears were justified. On May seventh, Soufrière reared its ugly head for the third time and belched forth a deluge of stones and ashes, accompanied by intermittent lightning and thunder, which again reduced the island to a wilderness, and took the lives of more than two thousand persons, thereby practically wiping out the peaceful remnant of the Carib Indian tribe.

But once more the lavish blessings of a tropical Nature visited the island. The ravages of this cataclysm, which had transformed St. Vincent into a place of doom, were swiftly healed, and today the island is again a very paradise of idyllic beauty.

Grenada

SPICE ISLAND OF THE
WESTERN WORLD





GRENADINES

LESS THAN TEN YEARS AGO, IT WAS my good fortune to reside in the enchanting archipelago of Netherlands East India, where, in the ineffably sublime Moluccas, the spice islands of legend of the East, I first became acquainted with the fragrant nutmeg and clove in their *habitat natalis*.

Eight years later I was to visit another enisle group, *nulli secundus* of small eyots of infinite charm, this time heading for the West Indies, the new home of nutmeg and clove. My course lay abreast of the dazzling Grenadines, whose number ranges from one to five hundred—the straggling Cyclades on the sixty mile route between St. Vincent and Grenada. And while it is true that most of these islands are mere bits of rocks and flimsy strips of earth, some low and others high, some uninhabited, others cultivated, and are undoubtedly the residuum or apex of submerged mountains, the most habitable and peerless gem in the Caribbean island girdle is monticolous Grenada, the spice island of the Western World.

This matchless, kaleidoscopic, tropical tapestry, in all its olivaceous opalescence and cerulescent pattern, lying peacefully astride the purplish, sheeny, ruffled but oftentimes tranquil Caribbean waters, glittered in the distance as our steamer dawdled along.

Many of these tiny islands in this tapestry were as fascinating

in scenic delights as their names were romantic sounding. To begin with there was Bequia, with its commodious harbor, and renowned for its chief food, which sports the diverting nomenclature of pigeon pea, a yellow-flowered legume, probably as palatable as the fusty lentil. Then there was also diminutive Mayero, no less romantic a spot, with its ruins of an unfinished Bath Stone mansion, originally made in England and sent whole to Mayero, to be erected. Then there are those with even more romantic sounding names, as dwarfish Cannouan, Balliceaux and Battowia, known for their livestock, in addition to squat Levera, Islet Ronde and plump Carriacou—which latter is the largest of the Grenadines and most fortunate in the proud possession of roads and even a botanical garden. Carriacou, so it is rumored, is the only island in West India where, ever since the days when planters settled there, a cotton, the Marie Galante variety, has been planted. Many of these islands have excellent beaches but ever since the days of Captain John Smith their beauty has been marred to an extent by the presence of Manchineel trees, that have been a menace to unwary travelers.

Carriacou presents a most interesting study because of its small holders' estate management, a condition brought about during the remaining years of the last century, when the sugar industry collapsed and the government was forced to take over the last remaining estates. Wisely, the government cut them up and parceled them out with most surprising success to native and white planters, —undoubtedly a parallel to that on which the twentieth-century Works Progress Administration has patterned its agrarian land schemes at the Virgins and elsewhere.

Besides the aforementioned isles, there is one among the remaining hundreds of spots that merits more than ordinary attention, on account of its name. I mean to refer to the solitary rock located almost under the smoke of Grenada and bearing the singularly bellicose name of Kick-em-Jenny—so termed by sea-salts and derived from the French "*Cay qu'on gêne*"—which seemed most appropriate by virtue of the paroxysms of its neighboring waters. However, the *ne plus ultra* of all these Cyclades, the *Facile Princeps*, is Grenada, the spice island of the American Mediterranean and of the Western World.

By scanning the history pages, we learn that it was christened Asunción by the Great Mariner, when he beheld it on the fourteenth of August, in the year 1498. In common with the other spots in this region, its annals have been profusely specked with blood; although this island, at least, the Spanish prudently left undisturbed—and for the very plausible reason that they had more than a faint suspicion that the warlike Caribs would have given them a very hot welcome and a drubbing besides, such as was to be handed out to the French and the British many years later.

As can be guessed, this island also figured in the prodigal grant to the Earl of Carlisle, but the good Earl for some reason or other forgot all about it, or his grant, so that the first event of real historical portent occurred when the Grenadines were purchased by the Governor of Martinique, *Sieur du Parquet*, the same *Sieur* who colonized St. Kitts in 1623, and who was a nephew of Captain d'Esambuc. This *Sieur* was a veritable bargain hunter so, in 1650, stuffed to the ears with beads, knives and brandy, he bamboozled the Carib Indians into a shady deal, unloading the worthless trinkets in exchange for the whole island—not unlike the deal Peter Minuit made with the Indians on Manhattan Island. Living up to the true spirit of those days, the Frenchmen, after having gained the goodwill of the gullible natives with their handful of trash, did not keep their bargain. So that they copied the ruthless methods of their contemporaries and proceeded, as even the French historian, *Du Tertre*, did not hesitate from recording for posterity, to exterminate them in the most systematic and cruel fashion, seeing to it that no Carib remained. As *Du Tertre* audaciously remarks in his chronicle, “. . . the expedition returned in very high spirits.” That is why at the most northwesterly point of Grenada there stands an accusing monument to “refined cruelty and human lust,” a rugged promontory called the *Morne des Sauteurs*, or the places of the leapers. A very grim legend haunts about this crag, for it was at this point that the hounded and panic-stricken Caribs made their last and desperate stand. It happened in the following manner:

Du Parquet, the governor of Martinique, encountered a band of possibly a hundred Caribs, which had been fortunate to escape the butchery of its white assassins. This was a chance, thought *Du*

Parquet, not to be missed. So with his men he fell upon the Caribs, killed all those that made even the slightest attempt at resistance, and drove the rest, who made a last stand, to the edge of the precipice. Here, the luckless remnant, preferring death to slavery, threw themselves down the precipitous cliffs, where they were dashed to pieces on sharp rocks and perished in the churning sea.

In his report Du Parquet callously remarked: "In this way I obliged the Caribs, out of a consideration of their own concerns grounded principally on the great advantages they received from the neighborhood of the French, to leave the French quietly possessed of Grenada." When the carnage was over, impressive "Te Deums" were sung and Mass was celebrated, *Ad Majorum Dei Gloriam*—to the greater Glory of God—the noble King of France had one more precious pearl to add to his Caribbean Diadem.

The Caribs that remained in the interior protested against the iniquitous bargain and the betrayal, so that warfare, strife and carnage were in the van for the next number of years, until the French West India Company acquired some property here in 1714, possibly attracted by the favorable reports that our friend, Père Labat, had sent home to France about the beauty of these islands and their commercial possibilities. Another epoch in Grenada's career had to be written when internal strife took its toll and when yellow fever mowed down hundreds at a time, or when a plague of ants and termites (brought here by slave ships from Africa) destroyed the crops. This brings us none too gently to the day when the Briton made his presence felt, in 1762, which presence, however, was very short-lived, for the English surrendered to the Comte d'Estaing in 1779, only to be restored again to her possession in 1783, and to retain it as British ever since.

In common with the neighboring British islands, this island also suffered inexorably from the ravages of the Brigands War in 1795, when its governor, Ninian Home, was put to death. But peace was not yet in sight, since the adherents of the Commune, headed by old man Hugues, found many sympathizers among the French residents and slaves, which latter were just aching to get into the foray, so as to secure their freedom. It was the lot of one Fedon, a colored planter, to ignite the fatal fuse of revolution in the island

and he became the instigator of a massacre that for bloodshed and human destruction cried to the heavens, and in which many of Grenada's leading men lost their heads. The brigands were practically in possession of the entire island in 1796, until with the arrival of Sir Ralph Abercromby an attack from neighboring Carriacou was launched. He landed at Palmist Bay and the leaders of the brigands were quickly captured, only Fedon managing to escape. But he met his Maker even before he reached neighboring Trinidad, by drowning. . . . This was the end of a bloody period in lovely Grenada.

Our liner was abreast of the entrance to the spherical harbor of St. George, its red-and-white hued, red-roofed brick houses straddling the hillsides and a promontory called Bay Town, which was ablaze with the omnipresent orange- and red-flowered Bois Immortel or *Madre de Cacao* (cocoa mamma). The Bois Immortel was at one time used for sheltering the cocoa plants from the hot rays of the sun, whereas today it fills no other purpose than the delightful one of enhancing the forces of light and shadow—a mighty good aesthetic cause.

As we sort of circumambulated the harbor's entrance, it became quite evident that here was one of the oddest, yet also one of the most perfect, shelters and landlocked anchorages to be had in this part of the world. Its extremely bottle-shaped entrance fitted into what at one time must have been an extinct volcano crater, and of which the side must have broken down. This intensely odd harbor may also provide the answer why its entrance at first seemed to be non-existent. It only became noticeable when we were almost on top of it. Once in this rather small place for anchorage, we secured our first sight of St. George town, a favorite photographic mecca, also of Careenage town, situated like an eagle in its eyrie, on the harbor site, as well as of the business section that could be discerned beyond, with a tunnel connecting the two.

The town itself, built as it is with steep streets straggling the hillside, reminded me on account of their precipitousness of the streets at St. Thomas or Malta. Many even are so perpendicular as to have necessitated the building of steps. 'Way above the harbor, on a plateau, towered historic Hospital-Hill Fort, at whose base

Macartney fought off the Comte D'Estaing. Higher still are the government buildings, lodged in another range of forts, those of Richmond Hill.

For sightseers not afraid of a climb, there awaits a rich reward in exciting adventure. The island has a range of volcanic hills and its gentle slopes and delightful valleys are a naturalist's happy hunting ground and contribute to one's delight. It is rich in vesture of verdure and bloom; forest-clad precipices and gray and red sandstoned buttresses and pillars of basalt alternate with mossy and fern-clothed glens, through which course delightfully pure cascading rivulets, waterfalls and many streams that come down between the slopes.

In addition to the above there exist at Grenada vestiges of ancient craters, such as, in the center, Levera and Lake Antoine. At the northern promontory Mount Maitland towers two thousand, seven hundred feet, while the Grand Etang, hardly six miles from St. George at the Windward Coast, and attaining a height of seventeen hundred feet, is also well worth visiting. The lake of Grand Etang is easily reached and today it has become a favorite health resort, with Sanatorium near by, and noted for its bracing mountain air and immediate surroundings which are superb in scenic delights. The lake reposes in a virginal forest setting, and several streams are known to issue from it. (It is probably a crater lake like this one that may have been responsible for the Mont Pelé eruptions.) The lake occupies the site of an ancient crater and is about twenty-six acres in extent. At one time, when the Soufrière of St. Vincent and Mont Pelé had their cataclysms, the Grand Etang also had her moments. The old lady threw up lava and sulphur, though on the whole she behaved quite well and fortunately left no casualties in her wake. Adjacent to Grand Etang Lake are several thermal springs which, like the Sanatorium, are equally well frequented by many in quest of new health.

But for the travelers who have more time at their disposal than the few hours which the cruise steamers, most unfortunately, in their desire to please and outdo, and who get too many ports on their itineraries, allow their passengers, I would recommend strongly a jaunt or drive past the Botanical Gardens to Grand Anse Bay, where a swim may be had on a white-sanded coral beach. When

thoroughly resuscitated, the return trip may be made over the hills just beneath Richmond Hill, whose ever-changing pattern of verdured hill and valley will fittingly reward one for the time expended. Should the visitor "doing" this gem, stay over for a few days, enthralled, as I have been, with the beauty of the place, I am sure that he or she will remember the sojourn for many days to come, and in gratitude for the service I render may even want to remember me in his or her will! What is more, the visitor may even remember for many a moon the nocturnal concerts and fanfares presented entirely for his or her edification. I, of course, allude to the famous concerts of the whistling frogs whose bombilation at times becomes so deafening that you wonder whether the world is coming to an end. To describe my own experience, no sooner had my wife and I retired, with our screened windows wide open to a heavy nutmeg-laden breeze that came wafting in, than we were treated to an indescribable hubbub—a drone and din that was the mingled roar of a myriad tiny throats, and that came pouring in on us from every side. They were little peepers, caterwauling like pneumatic riveters. This pandemonium was finally identified as the "regular subscription" nocturnal concert that is given by the multitudes of Grenada's whistling frogs, and that for syncopation, whoop and screech will stand out as a living Tin-Pan Alley monument to rhythm, timbre, and dissonance. At times the aubade suddenly died down, and we turned over, when the crickets and other no less long-winded or trumpet-tongued insects, not to be outdone by their whistling musical confreres, took up where the whistlers left off. Their staccato and sibilant tremors, often *sotto voce* or *sordamente* or some even *basso profundo*, and starting out on a tangent, blended most shrilly with the ululating and strident whistlings of the frogs.

As to all things, good or bad, so to this concert there also came an end, and as I faintly heard my wife murmuring something anent, "Ain't nature grand?" I dozed off to a state of *doux faire rien*. The whistling concert of Grenada had been a howling—or peeping—success.

Next day I continued my sightseeing bright and early, at ease with the world and whistling merrily, in a state of well-being that spoke well for the whistling frogs. After whiling away some time

in one of the oldest botanical gardens in the West Indies, and one that attracts, so I believe, many tree and plant lovers from near and far, I traipsed to one of the large nutmeg orchards. The fruiting season was on and the fruit was ripe, and I gazed upon the exquisite, pear-shaped and chocolate-colored nuts in all their glory. As I strolled under the heavily laden trees in this newly found habitat of the once Malay-Polynesian immigrant, my thoughts reverted to the days when, on an almost identical mission, I spent days and weeks in the gardens, or *Tuinen*, of Banda and the rest of the Spice Islands, where at Amboina, as early as 1515, they first had made their entree. Ninety years later the Dutch came upon this scene and succeeded in forcing their rivals from the now so-precious possessions.

The nutmeg and clove plantations, or *Tuinen*, as is their Dutch name, are of particular beauty and richness at Ambon and Banda, and it is from these that the Moluccas derive their nomenclature of Spice Islands. It is said that the clove is a native of Northern Moluccas, Ternate and Tidore, while the nutmeg's home is actually south of Ambon, on the Banda Archipelago. Should you not remember, nutmeg and mace were imported at an early date from India by the Arabs, as Masudi, an Arabian, on a visit to England in 916 A.D. and Kozwin, ditto, in 1280, related. That it has always been one of the most priceless and costly of condiments we may glean from the will of Jeanne d'Evereux, Queen of France, which was made in 1372 and which discloses that six ounces of mace were then appraised at the rate of eight shillings, or about \$1.92 a pound.

Although I am not desirous to historicize mace and nutmeg too much, both of which have united the welfare of the two islands so closely, I yet scarcely dare omit from this chronicle the *historiette* of the Connecticut nutmegs—which has given the State of Connecticut its soubriquet of "Nutmeg State."

A hundred and twenty years ago, a certain Frederick Accum startled the Londoners with his book "Adulteration of Food and Culinary Poison." Strange to say, when Accum's book was published, and notwithstanding the plague of inefficiency and all other "iencies" that were still upon the world, a sort of pure food hysteria passed through good old England. It did not end however with just that, because the worthy Frederick Accum's treatise was

eclipsed by the fulminations of another person who made the startling declaration that the makers of wooden shoe pegs in Connecticut were then making oats and nutmegs from discarded wood of sawmills. But even then the beaker was still not full nor was this all to the grand canard, for this fantastic person even asserted that they were also used as wood throughout the United States. Leaving this shilling-shocker yarn spiller without additional ado basking in the glory of his fantastic nursery tale and lest his bones rattle in their grave, permit me to say that it was in this manner that Connecticut gained its spicy name of the "Nutmeg State."

And now let us take a look at some of the spicy chapters in the tale of the nutmeg's fascinating historical career. This takes me back to the East India Dutch in 1622, whose pages dealing with spice are one of the astounding epics. It was the year when the famous East India Company, which was to make the East Indies safe for Dutch hegemony and influence, was founded. The company also made the spice trade its exclusive monopoly. It confined the cultivation of these products to a certain number of small islands they exclusively controlled. They hoped in that manner to prevent the smuggling of spice. Hence it came to pass that Ambon and a few other islands, *Uliassers* as they are known, were selected as the most suitable place for the cultivation of clove trees, whereas the Banda Islands were chosen for the exclusive propagation of nutmegs. It became a sort of religion with the canny Dutchmen that all plantations, together with all the wild-growing trees on it lying outside the specially picked range were diligently destroyed. Their methods became so doctrinal that they even went so far as to subject to severe punishments all those so-called culprits who laid out plantations outside the fixed zone. Hence the East India Company's guiding spirits, keen Dutch traders that they were, quite cunningly and with much cupidity managed to have all the spice trade flow into their own arsenals, with accruing large subsequent profits. And, making assurance doubly sure by not allowing more than a certain quantity to come into the market, they anticipated by a mere three hundred years the methods employed during the last decade of industrial evolution and overproduction, such as the burning of millions of pounds of Brazilian coffee, the burning of millions of Holland bulbs, and the destruction of wheat

and other commodities. Thus, there issued an edict from the East India Company solons in the East India House in quaint old Amsterdam that caused huge piles of coffee, nutmeg and clove—all surplus products—to be burned.

This, together with the fixing of definite growing areas, made the East India Company the germinator for the advanced twentieth-century methods and unwittingly the originators of the word *monopoly*. Palpably, they lived before their time. This enabled them to dictate price at their pleasure, just as the Holland merchant captains of today, from their spacious, high-ceilinged offices on the Heeren-gracht and Keizersgracht, are dictating, in a manner, the policies and fixing, in a way, the prices that shall prevail for those commodities that The Netherlands and its colonies control or monopolize. This needs some additional explanation: for instance, Holland controls the price of quinine because Java and the motherland control the growth of cinchona, whose bark is used for the manufacture of quinine. Holland also controls the price of cocaine, since Java, growing coco leaves exclusively, monopolizes the market and dictates the policy. Further, together with Britain and the Straits and Malay States, Java, Sumatra, and Borneo, where a large percentage of the world production of estate and native rubber is grown, control the world market of rubber and *practically* regulate production and, in a way, fix the prices. This was much to the distaste and ire of our own American manufacturers, who, after all, use at least eighty per cent of the total world consumption of rubber, and caused Harvey Firestone in Liberia and Henry Ford in the Tapajo region on the Amazon, to plant their own American-grown trees in American-controlled plantations. In other words, they hoped to become independent of these gigantic monopolies. Whether these plans worked is not for me to say. And as though that is not enough, there is Sumatra leaf tobacco, indispensable to the manufacturers of the best cigars, which is grown at Sumatra but practically controlled and sold through Amsterdam auctions. Last but by no means least, there remains tin, whose world production in the Banka and Billiton mines, together with those of the Malay States, Siam and Bolivia, is controlled and regulated and vested in a monopolistic body—with America and the rest of the tin-using countries doing its bidding, and paying the piper's price.

But let us see what happened to the Dutchman's precious spice traffic. From a perusal of records, it was brought out that there was just one fly in the ointment, or rather one flaw in their calculations, well conceived as they were, because they had overlooked Nature itself which would not tolerate or even sympathize with such selfish motives. What had happened to upset so severely these traders' calculations? A nutmeg pigeon! A large and handsome fruit pigeon (or *Carpophage*), as passionate a lover of all that is spicy as I am of my Holland herring, became a frequent visitor to the spice groves together with the Hornbill, of the Moluccas, which also took a mischievous part in the conspiracy against these Harpagonis. Incidentally, there was another nutmeg pilferer, the Ceram Cassowary, who also had the time of his life gorging himself on fruity nutmegs. Hence these three musketeers of the East India ornithotomic kingdom unwittingly upset the Hollander's apple, nay, spice cart.

For let us see what occurred. These birds, ordinarily accustomed to cheese parings and candle ends, *par moyen de dire*, carried the nuts which were their food to all surrounding islands and countries, so that trees grew up again and the world—the ultimate benefactor—was made safe for nutmegs. The three mercenaries did for the world what the Dutchmen had ordained should not be done.

The pigeons, for instance, and the rest of the spice-eating bird clan, were mighty particular in their tastes. For they picked the mace, which they digested, whilst they cast out the nut with the seed within, entirely uninjured. Now it is self-evident that after the birds had partaken of a good, solid, and may I add spicy, nutmeg or mace meal, they would take their constitutional flights from one island to another. They could hardly help spreading the seed in spite of the prohibition of a high and mighty and mercenary government. Now, since the birds had so ruthlessly (and with so much relish) upset the sauce piquante, suitable means had to be found to prevent the growth of such chance trees becoming a menace in the other islands of the Moluccas. Accordingly, every year the governor of the Moluccas, in grand procession and with much pomp and pep started on an expedition around Ceram and adjoining islands, accompanied by his soldiers, officials and a whole fleet of native craft. These spice-detecting and -destroying expedi-

tions were then known by the name of *Hongie* expeditions. Everywhere young growths thrived, the important governor grew restless and had the native growers most severely punished.

Hence the monopoly grew, with the Company and its satellites religiously guarding the precious treasure, much as a cat watches a mouse. It was a dissolution of the East India Company that toppled the walls of Jericho, and the Napoleonic age toppled over the peaceful existence of spice. Under the governorship of Sir Stamford Raffles, in the first decade of the nineteenth century, the British possessed themselves of the Dutch East India domain. That exploded the Dutch spice monopoly, but it was restored again in some measure when the islands were once more returned to the Dutch, after the Napoleonic debacle. But in 1873 the monopolistic rule in spice was entirely abrogated, brought about by a strange series of events. The otherwise slow-moving British had quite wisely, naturally against the resistance of the Dutch, used the period of their power for introducing the seedlings of these spice plants to the West Indian Islands and Brazil, where they thrive as well today as they did and still do in the Eastern hemisphere.

So that, as I strode through the orchards of Grenada and beheld the descendants of East Indian spice, I could almost envisage again distant Moluccas and East India. . . . There seemed to be the same dense shade and atmosphere, the same exotic bewitchment that is associated with these fragrant spice gardens, these park-like plantations, or *Perken*, as they are called in the East, although I did not see the lofty Canary trees, employed in the East Indies to spread the beneficial shade of their lavish foliage upon the young and growing plants. . . .

And now let us briefly dissect the nutmeg itself, the fruit of the *Myristica Fragrans*, a name well chosen to celebrate its delightful scent. It is of the size and somewhat the shape of a small pear, though not unlike an apricot in general appearance, and nestles among leaves as polished as that of holly. The fleshy part, which is yellow without, and white, or almost white, within, holds the nut, which is always uniform in size and is surrounded by its arilus, or what has become commercially known as *mace*. The nut is oval, and the shell is very hard and dark brown, with a scarlet network.

The shell houses the kernel which, when cured, results in the well-known nutmeg.

The plants "declare," or flower, in from four to six years. This flowering period is a very critical time for the planters, during which they speculate whether to have a preponderance of male or female trees. An overproduction of one makes the other of the species suffer, with subsequent hardships to the community. Hence the planter has learned exactly how to regulate this preponderance of the sexes. He watches his males, but keeps an eye on all the females, too. The male declares first, as the planter so well knows, and all he has to do thereafter is plant the young female specimen alternately with the male, and the conspiracy works out fine. When the megs are ripe, a tree will produce annually as many as four to five thousand nuts, which are gathered carefully by hand. Since nutmegs do not grow in Grenada under shading trees, or *mammas* as they are called, the nutmeg groves there may be said to be the most orderly and neatest of all the fruit species.

This brings me to the discussion of the planters' growing policies. They must have been diligent readers of East Indian history, for the West Indian planters appear to have emulated the early Dutch with respect to protecting the fruit of the nutmeg profits. The traffic in nutmegs, mace, and even cocoa, the standbys of the island's commerce, is governed by license, confining trade to certain dealers only. While nutmeg is Grenada's king pin, upon which the prosperity of the island turbinates, there is, however, a certain trade in cotton, coffee, kola nuts, fuller's earth and sulphur, which are traded in quite a bit through the pulse of the island, its native markets.

Grenada's markets, which like all West Indian markets are most colorful just after dawn, provide the traveler with a most vivid insight into true native life and inform him as to what are the products of the whole island. Here the pigeon pea lies peacefully alongside its big brother, the sweet potato, the latter crowding out with its bulk the lowly *cush-cush* and yam. Yonder rests the immigrant breadfruit, casting lovelorn eyes at the favorite of the idle rich, the starchy corn maize, which reposes languidly in the tropic sun. Besides these, there are the same tropic fruits that are to be had all throughout these isles and which are traded in amidst a

perfect West Indian babel of voices, predominantly French creole. The babel is often well-larded with arguments that seem to have no ending, with everybody talking loudly, yet not at all harshly or offensively, of nothing at all. . . .

At this market there were some stalls and booths occupied by affable colored women who, besides selling you many medical decoctions, also made overtures, for a very good price, to interpret your dreams, bad ones as well as good ones. They would select choice greens to help the bringing on of babies. They would proffer advice as to how to recover things that "inadvertently" may have been mislaid (or stolen). They would sell strange-looking seeds that were supposed to rejuvenate or prolong life, or to aid intercourse and further propagation. At one stall I watched the antics of a large spider, imprisoned in a bottle with honey, and learned that the wife who swallowed some of this honey would find it most efficacious in keeping her husband faithful to her. There were also some "cute" little snakes which, in a state of dry preservation, were used to restore sexual potency and to assure a large "crop of kids."

In short, these sibyls and geomancers, these Tiresias and soothsayers, would fulfill all the obligations of clairvoyants. And if this were not enough, these affluent ladies would offer incantations and exorcisms, which masquerade in Grenada under the generic name of Obeah, *obi*. They would also supply salves and poultices and pills and charms.

As a matter of fact, this presents a situation comparable to those of other West Indian markets, and parallels also the general subject of native remedies. Here, too, the colored folk innately distrust the white man's methods of healing the sick. One very good reason, among many others, is that, while not claiming a panacea for all ills, they have found some native remedies that are highly efficient.

The consideration of native medicine also brings to my mind the subject of magic and superstition, which is so inherently associated with these Obeah men and women, with particular reference to the more sinister sides of native people's superstitions and magical beliefs. Degraded forms of these are said to survive in the more remote districts of the islands, though I must confess that, in my

belief, many such tales are merely the products of overimaginative minds, and are written simply in an aspiring best-seller strain.

I could swear that these so-called explorers and globe travelers have never even seen Haiti and Guiana, the locales from which they dish up so spell-bindingly their fantastic tales of strange voodoo séances and mysticisms. Throughout the course of my more or less intensive wanderings, I have never seen or heard of those horrible orgies, where heads fly off or blood is sucked, children are killed to be offered to appease the wrath of green serpents, and the flesh of human or monkey is devoured, while frantic colored men dash through fires without being hurt. Yet that is what one well-known author and, recently, a foreign authoress would have us gullibles believe.

There exist, of course, many superstitions that are distinct from religion and that sport the fantastic names of Jumbies, Obeahs and Juppies. These are possibly an offshoot of the power of suggestion, combined with the most intimate knowledge that the African possesses of drug and herb properties. In relation to these Jumbies, *et al.*, I was told by one affable lady from whom I had purchased quite a collection of these "quak-quaks," as I called them, that the Jumbies are the very special spirits of the colored folk. She told me very seriously and convincingly that the individual Jumbie, merely as a side issue to its nefarious business, haunts dwellings and takes great delight in playing malicious tricks. The Juppy, however, is the spirit or ghost of the dead which, in its incarnate state, just lives on and on. It is the gullible native's constant fear of these duppies, juppies and jumbies, and all the other ghostly apparitions possessing supernatural powers, which provides an income and feasting for the Obeah man, and of which he takes the fullest advantage.

This Obeah man is quite a curious individual. He is a perfect judge of human nature and an extremely crafty personage. He is consulted in domestic troubles and is an adept at the concoction of love philters, at the weaving of magic spells over a lock of some beloved's hair, and the concoction of debilitating drugs for use on the beloved to make him (or her) weak physically, morally and sexually, or to make him strong, as the situation in the case war-

rants. In all of these fetishes, Obeahs, philters and love potions, this quack medicine man does a lively and thriving trade.

The greatest fear of Obeah seems to be attached to the use of the Obeah bottle, which is hidden in the house or hung over one of the doors. In its conglomeration of make-up, it is comparable to some sort of general store, for besides containing many pins, nails and animal teeth, such as those of dogs, cats and alligators, it has also a fine collection of rusty coffin nails, eggshells, cat hairs, and a host of other articles that, each in turn, suggest some pregnant meaning to their superstitious believers.

In the end they all seem to serve the same purpose. Their evil design is extremely successful, since the victims believe themselves conjured and sink into a state of complete dejection which practically always culminates in the same fatal ending, unless the authorities hear of it and step in. When this occurs, and it seems to happen quite often, then there is the real devil to pay! In most of these islands, laws exist against these strange practices that prescribe flogging as a penalty, and this the colored people seem to dread more than the black pest. But as evidence that even the whites are not exempt from making use of these practices (as we know so well they do here in America) I was told by an Obeah man who has since embraced the Catholic Church that white planters often employed Obeah men to sing incantations and to hang Obeah bottles to scare away thieves. One such bottle I have seen was, in some strange manner, dressed up with exotic-looking feathers of all hues. It looked like a miniature chicken coop in which a fox was raising hell!

The con-con, or the silk cotton tree of the Bush Negroes that I encountered on my treks through Netherlands Guiana, also exists here. These trees are said to be the home of many ghostly apparitions. What is even more curious, the fear of being moonstruck also exists here, so that one may encounter on some moonlit night a native religiously hiding under a huge umbrella.

In conclusion, let me dwell just for a moment on the religion of these people. I have spoken of the Catholic faith as having been embraced by an Obeah man. In that connection I would like to interpolate that while Protestantism is decidedly strong, and that although there are all varieties of other faiths, such as Wesleyan,

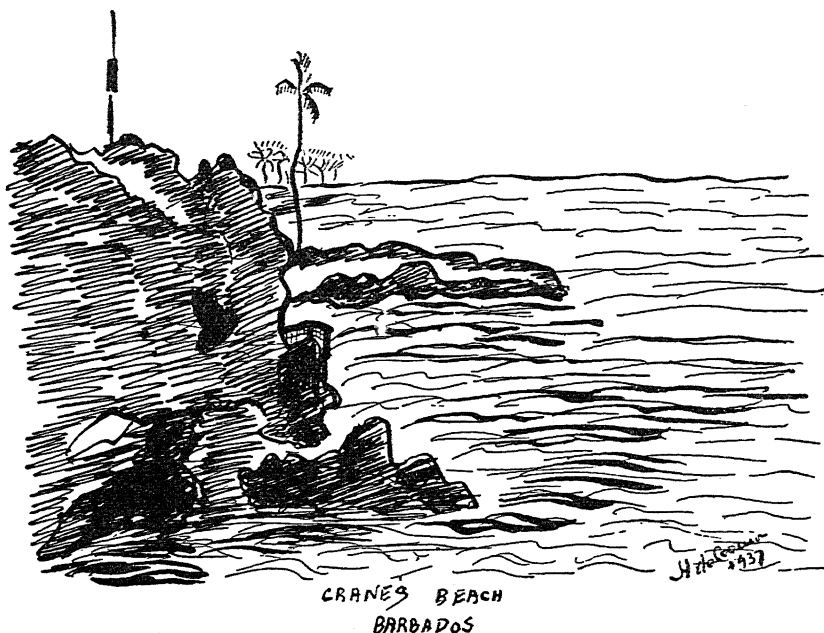
Methodist, Moravian, Plymouth Brethren, United Free Methodist, Seventh Day Adventist, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Christian Science, Salvation Army denominations, and other sects, still, the Romanist Church is extremely powerful and does great work. As a matter of fact, ever since the islands were in French and Spanish hands, no other church has held such sway. For which there is a most valid reason: the Catholic ritual simply appeals to the imagination of the Negro, since in common with the Hebrew service it offers something for the eye as well as for the ear, beginning with the altar lights, the swinging censer, the vestments, and culminating in the processions. This sort of service appeals to the color- and show-loving African more than would, for instance, the dull, unceremonial and unembellished services that prevail in the Reformed and Dutch Reformed Churches.

Barbados

THE ISLAND OF THE BEARDED FIGS



BARBADOS
STREET-SCENE



DURING THE REIGN OF CHARLES II, John Scott, the sovereign's geographer, described the island of Barbados—sentinel of the Atlantic and most windward of the most eastern of the group of islands girdling the Caribbean—in most exuberant terms, as follows: "Barbados is ye Crown and Fruit of all ye Careeby Islands towards Ye rising sunne, being ye most East of any and lies more conveniently than any of ye rest for a seat of Warre, being most healthful, fruitful and stored with all things of its own innate growth, which are necessary for life."

This, indeed, is as good a description as any of this "rare pearl in the English Crown," this "island of the bearded trees." It lies alone, fronting a long unceasing roll of the Atlantic and astride a direct steamer route from Europe to the West Indies, in the heart

of the northeast trade winds. It has a configuration oft referred to in travel books and steamship company's pamphlets, and is considered one of the healthiest places in all the Caribbean tropics.

Industrious map consultation will show that the island has figured in many geographers' descriptions, since a great number of interesting maps that deal with that island's historical coming of



age have come to light. A hasty scanning of these maps will show that this island has bobbed up at various times, under different names, some of which I would like to record here, though I am not desirous at this juncture of boring the reader with too much academic detail, even though I must confess that maps are one of my many weaknesses.

On a map of Bolognini Saltery, in his "Nova Franza," published in 1566 at Venice, the island of Barbados is put down as S. Barduda. In the old Royal Library of the British Museum, a very priceless Portulano is lodged for safekeeping, the handicraft of one John Rotz. This beautiful illuminated map is dedicated to King Henry the Eighth; it bears the date of 1542, and on it Barbados is referred to as Barbudoss. There exists also a map of the world, attributed to Juan de la Cosa, who, as you already know, was the

owner, mate and pilot of the "Santa Maria," and who, while accompanying Columbus on his second voyage, referred to Barbados as the *Islas de Canibales* (the island of the cannibals, possibly due to the Carib anthropophagists that lived there).

Another map, on which Barbados was referred to as the "Isla de los Barbudos," appeared in Herrera's geographical description of 1601. This map was probably the result of the instructions that Charles the Fifth had given to the Licentiate Rodrigo de Figueros, who identified that island as Barbados.

It was, however, left to Richard Ligon, Gent., of London, and who resided at Barbados, to present the most complete map of the island in 1667, when his "History of Barbados" saw the light. There were many more, such as the one executed in 1623 at Frankfurt-am-Main, by a Livinius Hulse, or a Venetian map executed by Hondio in 1595, which, incidentally, has graced the famous Hakluyt (last) volume of his "English Navigations," in the year 1600. But I had better stop, since enough is enough, and this should be sufficient evidence for any layman to conclude that Barbados, due to its favorable geographical position, must have been an early landfall in the first decades of the sixteenth century by all sorts of voyagers.

Still, Barbados' infant history, with its origin, in common with so many of these islands, lost in the far reaches of history, is wrapped in impenetrable obscurity. We do know, however, by the find of primitive implements, from time to time, such as conch shells and other prehistoric tools, telling their own story of aboriginal man (and preserved in the British Guiana, Georgetown museum), that the island must have been inhabited by aboriginal people.

In one of my previous books, I alluded to a Pedro à Campo who, in some strange fashion, had something to do with Barbados in the earlier days. It has come to light in John Scott's "Description of Barbados" that this à Campo, while en route to Margarita (the pearl-fishing island off the Venezuelan coast), "fortuned to fall in with Barbados." He went ashore and, out of sheer consideration, so the chronicle says, left a number of swine, or hogs, to breed upon the island for future wanderers. It was he, so the story goes, who gave the island the name it now possesses.

To quote the passage referring to his visit: "To fill his vessel's water butts, he fortun'd to fall in with Barbados and being becalmed went ashore near the river, principally called, ye Indian river but in ye map, Fontabelle. Finding water there, he fell bound to give the island a name. He likewise left hogs to breed upon it, which ye Indians of St. Vincent coming to know, they did some years after often visit it for hunting."

It is a fact that Barbados must have been well known as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century to Spanish travelers. They may even have come here to fetch Indians to make them groan and sweat as slaves in their Hispaniola (Santo Domingo and Haitian) silver mines. It is therefore not unlikely that the island may have figured in the illustrious Bartolomé de las Casas' generous and constant exertions when he procured from Charles the Fifth amelioration of their despicable condition for all natives of the islands and South America.

However, the one indisputable fact remains, and one of which the Barbadians, extremely fond of their history, take great delight in boasting, that when the earlier British colonized the island (though the true founders, as my story will show, have never been actually recognized) it was found to be entirely devoid of people, and a barren island. Another unchallengeable fact is that theirs is an island that has come without bloodshed into their possession, whose pages are not stained by Indian slaughters or eviction of whites—an achievement that cannot offend even the tenderest of pacifist consciences.

Going further into why the island is called Barbados, and not something else, presents also a very perplexing problem, because the word might have emanated from all sorts of sources. To quote an example, the Spaniards, when they hit upon this island in their quest for gold and slaves, dubbed it the "bearded, or los Barbudos," by virtue of the existence of many trees, or banyans or fig trees (*Ficus Laurifolia Lam*), that from their branches had great mats of twisted fibrous roots. These, to them at least, bore fancied resemblance to luxuriant long gray beards. Barbudo, in the Portuguese language, signifies one that has a thick beard, so that this in turn makes the untangling of the name's derivations an even more complex one. It is further thrown into confusion by the fact that

the oldest-known seal of the Barbados colony, to wit, the notary's silver seal, displays a bearded fig tree on it, which in itself would bear out the Spanish hypothesis. Upon purely philological grounds, it may simply be the Spanish word for the hanging branches of vines that strike root in the ground, the banyan tree of the ages.

And if I may be permitted to state my own belief, its nomenclature may have been simply a corruption of Saint Bernard, by which name an unidentified island, located on the oldest known maps and situated in the same latitude and longitude as Barbados, was known. Whatever the name's origin actually may have been, since my guess is anybody's guess, I am content to welter in the prevailing chaos that beset the rest of the historians and call it a day.

Now let us consider a brief survey of the island's interesting history. It presents a situation comparable to some of the other Caribbean spots, except that this one has its pages speckled with little bits of Americana, always as intriguing to me as it would be to anyone who has made America his second Fatherland. In my earlier Amsterdam schooldays, it was primarily Dutch, Dutch Colonial and European history that tickled my fancy, as it must have tickled the fancy of all other knowledge-eager little Dutchmen. But once I set foot, twenty-five years ago, a young sprig of nineteen, at historic Boston (and for which I thank my Maker and my lucky star!) I was more than desirous to leave behind me my old beloved land with its innumerable and commendable qualities, together with its old-age creakiness and a lot of out-worn ideas with which the Old World is rich, but which have long outlived their usefulness. Hardly five minutes off the Cunard Line vessel, and forgetting all about the old Adams House where I had been recommended to put up, I set out like a whirlwind to look for relics of the Revolutionary and Tea Party days. I assure you I had a dickens of a time trying to find vestiges of that hectic period, such as those of the engraver Paul Revere who, as you all know so well, had made an engraving of the Boston Massacre. Believe it or not, in my naïveté I even went to look for what relics might have remained of that fellow Mein, the publisher of the Boston *Chronicle* and the chap who accused our patriot John Hancock of importing British goods and tea while being at the same time a signer of the

non-importation agreement. I forgot even to look after my baggage, that was still on the dock, as I was more anxious to see if perchance some relic had remained that would bring back the memories of such noble fellows as Samuel Adams. (I thought at the time that it was after him that the Adams Hotel, which I disgraced with my so humble and insignificant presence, had been named.) I had traipsed around for *nine* hours, looking for *mementos historica* of other patriots, such as Josiah Quincy, and even went to look for Grey's Rope Walk, and the Custom House that had been the scene of much brawling and massacre and that was sprinkled with the name of a Preston. I recall now, as I turn back my own biographical pages, that when I finally landed at the Adams House, almost exhausted and literally overcome by the same emotions that must beset all newcomers to this great land which appeared to me a gigantic place, the first question that I fired at the room clerk at the desk (who must have thought me a nut) was whether he knew where Boston's historical museum was. This silly question was almost paralleled a week or so later upon my first visit to Philadelphia when, startling an unsuspecting and club-swinging cop, I impulsively bombarded him, with that sort of irresponsible fervor that is common to youth, with the query as to where I could find the Blue Anchor Tavern. He looked at me in as much amazement as if the town had been suddenly struck by an earthquake. And when I then meekly and in my most perfect college English ventured the information that it was the famous Inn, the *pied-à-terre* on the banks of the Delaware, somewhere at Walnut and Dock streets, and timidly suggested that if that was too far to get to perhaps he would be willing to direct me to some other place that ought still to be standing from the time of Penn's arrival in 1682, or the time of Captain William Dare, or tell me where I could behold the 2008-pound Liberty Bell, cracked or not cracked, that great treasure in front of the Independence Hall, and that—"Nuts!," or some other such word, was the powerful man's laconic reply, which was perhaps as good a reply as any to an impetuous youngster of nineteen.

With this little bit of tacking, or digression, let me come back once more to the history of Barbados which, as I have already emphasized elsewhere, has not been a record of warring nations but

may better be compared to a sort of family affair, in which fighting Englishmen slapped it out among themselves.

It is curious that, for nearly sixty years after Juan de la Cosa had identified his Islas de Canibales on his map of 1500 A.D., many Spanish and Portuguese and other foreign ships, barks, galleons and carracks and pinnaces just sailed on past without giving Barbados a tumble. The mystery of why they did this must, I suppose, remain a sealed book. Not so with the British, of whom one, a certain Master Charles Leigh, toward the end of the sixteenth century was peacefully engaged on a plantation on the Wiapoco River (the boundary line between French Guiana and Brazil and today called Oyapok). To him, Sir Olive Leigh of Kent, about the year 1605, dispatched the "Olive Blossom" with stores and settlers for his brother. This vessel, under command of Captain Cataline (contrary reports notwithstanding) must have steered out of his course. In those days, with vessels dependent almost entirely on trade winds, and having to fall back on dead reckoning as to speed and such, and with distances quite fantastic, egregious errors were quite common. As a matter of fact, errors were always made in navigation, early charts show. Longitude could not be determined, except as a dead reckoning based on a guess as to the speed of caravel or ship. Instruments then were imperfect, resulting often in mistakes of as high as eight degrees. There were in fact no chronometers, no Greenwich time with the instruments for measuring the sun's altitude, no astrolabe, no cross or forestaff nor Davis blackstaff. That is why the habit of these self-relying skippers made the achievements of these dark ages loom up so terribly meritorious now. Just imagine yourself trying to sail these unknown seas, that to them were hopelessly blank, helped with nothing much from science, or at least without all that with which science has equipped our present seamen. The business of these courageous voyagers was simply to find out what wonders lay hidden beyond the familiar horizon; what they did find beyond, for them was nothing else but *ultima Thule*.

That is why we should not be hard on poor Captain Cataline because he landed at Barbados instead. The island, except for some Indians, seemed uninhabited by white settlers. Hence the good Captain, with characteristic loyalty to his Crown and Master, be-

stirred himself sufficiently to take possession in the name of James I and, in accordance with prevailing customs, not forgetting the Church, he erected a cross on the shore, adjacent to a deep bay, now called Hole Town Bay. He further commemorated the event by inscribing a tree as follows: "James K of E and of this island" (James, King of England, and of this island). Since nothing else happened that was worthy of note, he sort of dropped out of the picture, and we have to leave him where he dropped.

About the same time that Captain Cataline did his inscribing in far-off Barbados, there were some big things on the carpet in London's merchant circles, especially in the counting-house of the Courteens. As you may remember, the elder Courteen had fled from Alva's tyranny and from Menden in the north of The Netherlands. His son, William, who had already entered into all sorts of ventures in outlandish places, was on very good speaking terms with King James I, who, incidentally, did Courteen the great favor of borrowing handsome sums from him from time to time—an extraction that was often quite painful to the brothers Courteen. Since fair exchange is no robbery, as the saying goes, it is easy to understand why William petitioned the king, in 1625, for a grant of land in the southern portion of the world, not yet bestowed on any of his subjects. As the land had been granted to the Earl of Marlborough, the Courteens and the earl entered into partnership with the avowed purpose of doing a little "planting," as colonizing in these days was called. In the old charters issued by the Sovereign of England, Barbados was at once referred to as a plantation.

These enterprising merchants had many ships sailing the seas, one of which anchored in 1624 at Oistin's Bay, Christchurch, on the south coast of Barbados. Upon its return to London town, the captain described this almost uninhabited place to Sir William (true to form, he had been knighted by the king, as a reward for his little favors) in such a manner that his eyes opened wide. This happened about the time when the Dutch had eight hundred vessels engaged in warfare and commerce in these West Indian waters and were just aching to singe the beard of the King of Spain. I suppose this desire was due to the very plausible reason that it was after all the best and most effective manner in which to repay this worthy for the cruelties inflicted upon the Dutch by the Duke of Alva, King

Philip and the Inquisition. Which also proves the theory that the English did not possess a monopoly on maul and plunder.

Quite in the way of its regular business, that included the pleasant but often hazardous pastime of preying upon the Dons, a privateer of the Courteens, homeward-bound in 1624 from Pernambuco, where the British had secured quite a footing, sailed north-westwards right across the track of the trade winds. Its commander, a Captain John Powell, the Elder, sighted the virgin isle and went ashore to ascertain what victual or water she might offer. He did more than hunt the progeny of the hogs that had been left there by our friend Pedro à Campo, because he actually explored the leeward coastline and found evidence of large forests, and a prevalence of dyewood of great value.

Highly pleased, the good captain sailed homeward, but by a circumambient route, because he had heard in Brazil of the tobacco plantation of Thomas Warner at St. Kitts and had decided to drop in, ostentatiously for a wee doch-an-dorrach, and a pipe, or a wee morsel and toddy. However, that was not his real purpose. What he really was after was to get the lay of the land, and of tobacco-growing besides. Once back again in London, the resourceful captain rendered a report to his employer, reading, in part, as follows: "After visiting all ye bays in ye west and southern parts of ye island . . . to promise much of the nature of Brazil and adorned with curious prospects rather than mountaines and stored with wild hogs and judged it worth especial notice," so that Sir Peter Courteen informed brother William that "Barbathes was an island not inhabited by any nation, of a good soyl and very fit for a plantation." Hence, the worldbeaters Courteen, sensing the possibilities of Barbados as a tobacco plantation, and the primary advantage of its location eighty miles to windward of the regular girdle of the Antilles, wasted no time.

Stern, tight-lipped Sir William decided to colonize. One good morning of the year 1625 he called together, in his stuffy counting-house in the City, John Powell, the originator of the scheme, Captain Henry Powell, the brother of John, his own brother, Sir Peter Courteen, and his brother-in-law, John Mounsey. They agreed to form a small private syndicate for this venture that was definitely to "plant" the island. These plantations, as they then

were called, even though they might embrace a whole island, were toward the end taken in by the government, which was prompted by the thought that traffic and trade should be restricted to the mother country and colonies.

Now let us see what was the result of these fortuitous happenings. In 1627 Sir William fitted out another expedition to plant Barbados, and subsequently the "William and John," a devilish



small vessel, commanded by Captain Henry Powell, with a complement of forty men and stores, weighed anchor from London Docks. That this voyage was not without its moments was evidenced by the fact that they engaged upon the delightful little diversion of mastering a prize, from which vessel they took eight colored men who were removed willy-nilly to Barbados to be driven as slaves.

And so they landed on February 20, 1627, at Hole Town, on the leeward coast, where, twenty-two years earlier, Captain Cataline had landed. The first settler ashore was William Arnold. Then they worked fast. They hoisted the flag, named the place, after building a fort, Plantation Fort, and elected Captain William Deane as their first governor. Barbados had been "planted."

Yet, while the colony started out with courage, there was something makeshift about the whole affair, though it would subsist and it would work. The soil was considered good but, after a bit

of reconnoitering, they discovered to their dismay that, due to the absence of legumes and food-yielding plants, their food supply would soon run out unless fresh supplies, in stock and stores, could be obtained. That was nothing, said the resourceful Captain John, and forthwith he sailed for the Guiana colony, founded on the Essequibo River. Here an obliging Dutch governor volunteered aid, so John, after an absence of only a few months, returned, not only with supplies and seeds but also with a party of Arowak Indians, who were to assume the task of becoming the agricultural instructors to the British colonists. Everything seemed to be *couleur de rose* but, alas, there was a fly in the otherwise so smooth ointment. The colony began to sputter and backfire before it even had begun to move.

A cloud had arisen on the horizon from neighboring St. Kitts. In the mind of Sir Thomas Warner, who a couple of years before had learned, from the free- and easy-talking Elder Powell, about Powell's purported discovery of Barbados, a plan of sinister design took shape. This Warner, by the way, as I have tried to depict in my St. Kitts chapter, was no ordinary planter of tobacco. He was defiantly robust, and of indomitable nature and ceaseless energy, and endowed with a never-ending itch to do feats of importance—a man whose every breath exhaled the spirit of the courageous adventuring times. He possessed a gift for leadership and a faculty for commanding obedience and entertained ideas well in advance of his time. The soubriquets of a Cecil Rhodes, a Sutter, a Hill, a Clive or a Raffles could have been safely affixed to him, for he was essentially an empire builder. He was a man swimming with the tide, and a very good swimmer indeed.

He therefore set sail in 1625 for England, to seek government recognition for his schemes. From Charles I, a veritable Lord Bountiful, who used to give away with his left hand what his right hand did not know about (in other words, a very generous soul with things that did not belong to him), and through the intermediary Earl of Carlisle, Warner became the governor of the isle of Barbados, while Carlisle received the charter, not only of the isle in dispute, but also of neighboring St. Kitts, Nevis and Montserrat.

Warner's most plausible contention was that, since no one so far had staked a legal claim, what was more reasonable than that he

himself should do it? Hence he and his followers arrived at Barbados, on the windward coast, primed to contend with the Powell-Courteen crowd. As can be expected, a squabble ensued between Warner's, or Carlisle's, Windward men and Courteen's Leeward trustees, and they came to blows, with victory perching upon the shoulders of the Windward men.

In order to make this chronicle complete, I should also emphasize that in Chancery pleadings in 1629, when evidence on the point of discovery and sole ownership of Barbados was proofed, it was definitely established that John Powell had actually discovered the island, and was the first person "that did discover the island and did sett upon his maties standard there to the honor of this nation and to the increasing of his Majesties dominions."

Lord Carlisle died in 1636 and left a boodle of debts, so was none the better for his grant. He devised the Caribbee Islands for the payment of his debts and bequeathed what was left of them, after the settlement of these debts, to his son. This son now transferred his share, which included the Barbados, to Lord Willoughby of Parham. This worthy lord, who promulgated an act that recognized the king's right to the island, and who served as governor of the island throughout England's civil war, had had much to do with the snarls that passed between the Cavaliers and Roundheads of this "Little England." These fancily named fellows, as you may well remember, were fighting for a cause, the Roundheads upholding the cause of freedom within the colony itself, while the Cavaliers maintained the cause of the rights of the colony against the Commonwealth at home.

The inhabitants, reinforced by many royalist refugees, put up such a scrap that Cromwell, engaged on his mission of blood and iron, on October 15, 1651, despatched a certain Admiral Ayscue to teach these royalists a lesson. This he did, albeit in a rather gentlemanly manner, considering the times. He forced Lord Willoughby out and reduced the islanders to subjection, but not until a charter, or articles of agreement, was signed on January 11, 1652, so that for well over two centuries Barbados enjoyed uninterrupted peace, under a constitution which the Commonwealth had pledged itself to observe.

Hence it also came to pass that loyal and chivalrous Lord Wil-

loughby, who had agitated for the recognition of his rights, saw his fight crowned with success when the Barbados Privy Council set aside for him half of the annual profits derived from the island. This money was raised by a tax on all exports, and the payments were kept up until this act was abrogated in 1838. Meanwhile, Lord Willoughby had made an enviable name for himself, since he was also the author of that famous declaration, made between him and the council and assembly of that island, against the Parliament of England, as reprisal against the act passed by Parliament that forbade trading with Barbados, Bermuda and Virginia.

I wonder now, as I am writing these lines, whether it was this interesting document that our own American colonists had in mind when they embarked upon their controversies with the mother country. I even ask myself now whether our own Declaration of Independence was not in some manner inspired by, or had received some of its pattern from, this famous Willoughby document. Whether my surmise is right or wrong, the fact remains that both perdurant documents exuded a similar noble spirit.

Barbados' further history was not barren of events, many of which materially affected the welfare, and aided the course, of the Empire. There was, to begin with, a sort of social call from the Dutch Admiral de Ruyter who, with the victory of Chatham still fresh in his mind, appeared at Carlisle Bay with his fleet of warships, to wit, five ships and a complement of twenty-five hundred men, to teach the British Barbadians "mores" (the archaic Dutch colloquialism for teaching a lesson). The lesson, however, fell far short of its purpose because, for the first time, I believe, in this famous admiral's career for the Dutch State, he met his Waterloo, and fate betrayed its most ironical face when even his own ship, the "Mirror," was disabled from the fire of the forts of Carlisle Bay.

While it is true that no foreign flag was ever raised over this little bit of England that enjoys with Bermuda the distinction of the possession of the oldest British rule in the British West Indies, becoming separated in 1895 from the Grenadines, Tobago, Dominica, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, it had nevertheless a narrow escape. During our own revolution and after the fall of Yorktown, many islands were taken from England's grasp. But for reasons

already defined, Rodney saved this island, among others. During the World War the island suffered another fright when its security was imperiled by the presence of three German cruisers near its shores.

No events in this island's history loom up for Americans, at least, with such color and importance as, first, the advent of Captain Henry Powell and, second, the visit which our own George Washington paid this island many years later.

But the Powell incident, to my mind, is the more remarkable of the two, from an historical standpoint, since it links Barbados in some indirect way with the founding of Massachusetts. Let me explain:

Among those who accompanied Captain John Powell to make their home in Barbados was a young eighteen-year-old gentleman, Henry Winthrop, a son of a John Winthrop, of Groton, County of Suffolk, England. This latter was the same John Winthrop who, three years afterwards, betook himself and his family, with all his chattels and belongings, to Massachusetts Bay, where he landed at Salem on June 22, 1630, there to develop into the famous Puritan governor.

It may not be amiss at this time to take a glimpse at some of the correspondence that took place between this New England John and Barbados Henry, the son who joined the above-mentioned Captain Powell.

Numerous letters have been preserved by the descendants of this Henry and John Winthrop, some of which, at various times, have appeared in the "Massachusetts Historical Collections" and in "Life and Letters of John Winthrop, Governor of Massachusetts Bay Company, at their migration to New England, 1630" (the work of a descendant, Robert C. Winthrop, and published at Boston in 1864).

But in order to present to the reader a somewhat closer picture of the beginning of the infant Barbados colony, and the needs of the planters of these hard pioneering days, I allow myself the liberty, possibly prompted by my interest in this Americana, to quote from a letter sent by Henry Winthrop and written at "Barbathes" on October 15, 1627. This letter was carried home by a "Plim-

mythe Shippe" and has been preserved by the New England family.

"MOST LOVINGE FATHER,—After my humble dutye remembred to yor sellfe and to my mother and grand mother, my loue to my brotheres and sisters, and to the rest of my [illegible] and frendes and acquentence, thes are to let you vnder stand yt I did wr[i]ght to you [by] Captane Powell; but least yt you haue not reseyed my leter, I thought good to laye hould of an oppertunytie prof-ered to me by a Plimmythe shipe, tuchinge here to sertyfye you of my helthe and wellfare, to fare as time will giue me leue. I blesse God yt I was at see, aboue 3 mounthes, and had not one houres sickenes, not science the time I was landed to this presente houre. I am here on this Iland of the Weest Indydes colled the Barbathe, settled for a plantatyon for to-backow, one wch Iland here is but 3 score christyanes and fortye slaues of negeres and Indyenes, and here I doe purpoes, and if it please God, to stay 3 yeres: for the disscriptyon of the Iland I will leav it till you doe reseave my letter by thes Captaine Poowell, in which letteres I haue wright to yow about much bysynesse, for the sendinge of me sume men ouer and clothes and other thinges, and in the mean t[I]me afore you doe reseave these letters, and yf you here of a ship yt toucheyes here then yt you woold send me ouer sum 2 or 3 men yt they be bound to searve me in the West Indydes some 3 yere or 5, wch you doe thincke good to binde them for, and get them as resonable as you can, promysinge them not aboue 10 pd a yere, and a chest of conveniense for clothese and sum linyng clothes for my sellefe for shurte and stokinges for them, and 30 p peyre of strong 3 solle shoos with [illegible] and wex and thered, and 5 thousand of sparow billes, a dozen of kniues, and a rundlyet of cheese, bute of 10 galyenes, and sume other thinge yt you doe thincke I haue need of, and send me, and those thinges allso, with all sped you can, I wright for by my letteres by Captane Powell, and wthin this halfe yeere I hope to send you 500 or a thousand wayght of tobackow. Thus craving yr prayers I rest—in haste

"Yr obedyente Sonne,

HENRY WINTHROPE."

The answer which the Squire of Groton sent to this letter has also been preserved.¹

"SON HENRY,—It is my daily care to commend you to the Lord, that he would please to put his true fear into your heart, and the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you may be saved, and that your ways may be pleasing in his sight. I wish also your outward prosperity, so far as may be for your good. I have been sick, these seven or eight weeks, near unto death; but the Lord hath had mercy on me to restore me; yet I am not able to go abroad.

"I sent you by Capt. Powell a letter, and in it a note of such things as I likewise sent you by him, in a chest with two locks, whereof the keys were delivered to his brother, who went master of the ship. The things cost me about £35; but, as yet, I have received nothing towards it. I sent divers times to Capt. Powell about your tobacco, but my man could never see it, but had answer, I should have it, or money for it. But there was ten pounds of it, by your appointment, to be delivered to one and the worth of four lb to another, which made me that I knew not what course to take; besides, I found, by the rolls you sent to me and to your uncles, that it was very ill-conditioned, foul, and full of stalks, and evil colored; and your uncle Fones, taking the judgment of divers grocers, none of them would give five shillings a pound for it. I desired Capt. Powerr, (coming one day to see me,) that he would help me with money for it, which he promised to do; but, as yet, I hear not from him. I would have sent you some other things by Mr. Randall; but, in truth, I have no money, and I am so far in debt already, to both your uncles, as I am ashamed to borrow any more. I have disbursed a great deal of money for you, more than my estate will bear. I paid for your debts since you went, above £30, besides £4. 10s. to Annett and Dixon, and now £35. Except you send commodity to raise money, I can supply you no further. I have many other children that are unprovided, and I see my life is uncertain. I marvel at your great undertakings, having no means, and knowing how much I am in debt already. Solomon saith, He

¹ "Life and Letters of John Winthrop, Governor of Massachusetts Bay Company, at their emigration to New England, 1630," by Robert C. Winthrop. Boston: Ticknow and Fields, 1864.

who hasteth to be rich, shall surely come to poverty. It had been more wisdom and better becoming your youth, to have contained yourself in a moderate course, for your three years; and by that time, by your own gettings and my help, you might have been able to have done somewhat. But this hath been always the fruit of your vain, overreaching mind, which will be your overthrow, if you attain not more discretion and moderation with your years. I do wonder upon what ground you should be led into so gross an error as to think, that I could provide ten such men as you write for, and disburse a matter of £200, (when I owe more already than I am able to pay, without sale of my land,) and to do this at some two or three months' warning. Well, I will write no more of these things. I pray God, make you more wise and sober, and bring you home in peace in his due time. If I receive money for your tobacco before Mr. Randall go, I will send you something else: otherwise you must be content to stay till I can. (If you send over any more tobacco, take order it may be delivered to me, and if you will have others to have shares out of it, let me have the disposing of it; for this last course of yours makes me jealous of your intent, as I can be no less, when you gave me such particular directions for the best improvement of it, and yet underhand appoint another to dispose of a good part of it. Well, enough of this.¹) Your brother (as I wrote to you) hath been in the Levant above this half year, and I look not for him before a year more. Your friends here are all in health. Your uncles and aunts commend them to you; but they will take none of your tobacco; only your uncle Tindale and aunt (whom you write your kinswoman upon the outside of your tobacco) thank you for theirs. I sent you, also, two boys, (for men I could get none,) such as Capt. Powell carried over; but I knew not what to do for their binding, being not able then either to walk or write, and they being but youths. For news, here is little but what, I suppose this bearer can tell you. We shall have peace with France. The Dutch have taken from the Spaniard, in the West Indies, a very great prize of silver, gold, etc., and have brought it safe home. The king of Bohemia, and his oldest son, going aboard

¹ The passage in parentheses was omitted in the letter as contained in the Appendix to the "History of New England."

to see it, in their return were cast away. The king was saved, but the prince and many others were lost.

"Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston, and Sir William Springe, are knights of the parliament for Suffolk. All the gentlemen have been long since set at liberty. Sir Francis Barrington is at rest in the Lord. Sir Henry Mildmay, of Graces, is sheriff of Essex, and Mr. Gurdon for Suffolk.

"I have staid sending my letter above a week since I wrote it, expecting some money from Capt. Powell, according to his promise, that I might have sent you some other things; but I hear of none. There for I will end, and defer till some other occasion. So, again, I commend you to the blessing, protection, and direction of the Lord, and rest,

"Your loving father, "JO WINTHROP.

"London, this 30 of January 1628."

Now, having thus disposed of one outstanding American figure whose name, though indirectly, is linked with that of Barbados (if only being the father of Henry means something), let us focus our attention upon that other no less conspicuous historic figure, George Washington, who, about one hundred and twenty years later, in 1751 and 1752, made Barbados his temporary arbor.

It is worthy of note that this happened one year before this young man, who was twenty-one then, was to come into the public eye. For in 1753, George in his heyday of youth was selected by Robert Dinwiddie, then Governor of Virginia, to carry the message to the French commander of the forts in Ohio Valley to kindly "scram," and which he had to do two years later. George Washington became the hero of the day.

Washington's stay in Barbados was brief, though one would not think so from reading his Journal or diary. It showed that for his young years, and having really no pretense of what one would call today a finished education, he had that rare and so much to be desired faculty of rather acute and natural powers of observation. For in this "Journal" a great amount of useful information about the island, its climate, life, population, resources and soil, as well as its defenses, was clearly given, and showed how well informed this young fellow already was in all affairs of life. Washington was

then but nineteen or twenty years of age, had been a licensed surveyor in Virginia for over three years and, shortly before sailing, had been commissioned Adjutant-General of Virginia, with the rank of major and carrying a stipend of 150 pounds a year.

His journey to the West Indies was primarily to act as companion to his invalid brother, Major Lawrence Washington, the proprietor of Mount Vernon, who was suffering from an obstinate pulmonary disease. This induced him to try the efficacy of a winter in Barbados, which even at that time was known as a favorite health resort. Its season was from November to May, and its bracing, health-giving climate and its temperature that never seemed to exceed 85 degrees could not help but be conducive to the health of convalescents.

Brother Lawrence was nearly fourteen years older than George and the affectionate attachment of these two was marked from early childhood, though particularly so after their father's death. Lawrence had received a fine education, held a captain's commission in the British Army, had traveled and seen much of the world and was endowed with business acumen and strength of character, so that, being the oldest, and having a sort of paternal superiority, he was left the management of their affairs after their father's demise. What is more, he had a deep and abiding affection for his brother George. Throughout all his life he discharged himself of the manifold duties with infinite care, and by enterprise and excellent judgment considerably increased the value of the inheritance. However, he never enjoyed a strong constitution, and in 1751 his wife and brothers observed with great alarm that his condition had become aggravated. Upon physician's order and implored by his own relations, who strongly urged that he take the trip, he decided to sail for Barbados. It was natural for George, who owed so much to Lawrence in fatherly care and rapid advancement, to accompany him on what became George's first and only sea voyage. He watched over his big brother as a youth would look after his girl friend on their first night out.

Sir Algernon Aspinall, commenting upon the utterance of a patriotic American that "the only place worth seeing in the island was the house where George Washington stayed," branding same as pure nonsense, has hit the nail on the head. There are innumer-

able things worth while at Barbados beside the house where George had lived. I must share Sir Algernon Aspinall's opinion that "there is nothing conspicuously different in the house where Washington lived." Colonel Crofton's house is a Washington landmark, it is true, but so is the Savannah Club, about a mile from Trafalgar Square at St. Ann's and surrounding what was formerly the locale of the parade ground. It must have been near here that Major George, for the first time in his young life, attended a performance or show at the Garrison Theatre.

Another thing that comes to my mind in connection with their visit, is that George, two weeks after arrival, contracted a mild case of smallpox that confined him to his bed from November 17th to December 12th. They sailed home again on December 22nd, so that they had barely three weeks to see the island, and yet, not only did George Washington pen his delightful "Journal," but the Father of our country and his brother Lawrence were royally received by the Barbadians as well as by the British officers, whose hospitality has become almost proverbial. There was additional reason because Lawrence was a fellow officer and had won fame in the battles of Cartagena and on the Spanish Main.

And with these pages, that may stand as a summary of the earlier history of Barbados, let us now examine briefly what are the advantages of a traveler's visit to this island.

Short as is the twilight in the Antilles, there was still enough light left in the western sky, as our steamer slipped into Carlisle Bay, for me to gain a good panoramic view of this well-kept garden, this one great sugar estate that is Barbados.

The harmonious varicolored hues of the sky seemed still fresh as they glowed on nature's palette—yellow, mauve, green and dove-color, crimson and the palest of blue, blended and coalesced into a deep, indescribable tropic purple. Nature for the uncounted time had harnessed to its genius the elemental forces of light and shadow that, without the use of pigment, resulted in breath-taking vistas. Edging the beach and fronting the Atlantic, save for a boom of the surf and the scream of the birds, the island seemed well-nigh dreaming and aphonic. Terrace upon terrace of cane and other growths rose in gentle gradient to the chalky marl of the thousand-foot-

high Mount Hillaby. Frond-nodding trees and palms like stately yeomen guarded the amphitheater-like terraces that appeared like gigantic flights of bronze, green and yellow.

We anchored in the open carenage not far from the breakwater, where vessels of all sizes—sloops, launches, shoreboats and schooners—sought refuge in Bridgetown's lively harbor which, even at this belated hour of arrival, seemed to be all on the move. Once within the breakwater scores of smaller craft, like little waterbugs, deftly flitted out of our way. Straddling the foot of the hills, throbbed well-sheltered, pleasing Bridgetown, the port capital of Britain's "Little England."

The first impression was quite pleasing to the eye. In every direction a labyrinth of roads, which I discovered later were of almost blinding whiteness, coiled like an endless snake through the low-lying hills. Dotted about closest to the water level were stately houses of the planters, the Yacht and Aquatic Club, delightfully clustered in green, while somewhat higher up were the little villages of the colored folk.

Before our liner had even dropped anchor, lighters and shoreboats were propelled with utmost speed to our steamer to take care of cargo and passengers too. There was nothing new under the sun in this water-traffic where docking was out of the question and where labor and many words were lost by gesticulating aquatic teamsters, as they clamored in a bric-à-brac of small-size boats for one's patronage. It had become a *bataille royale*, before one's actual landing. But it was all worth it, I am sure.

Bridgetown itself is quite dusty, and though on first sight it is a cleanly and picturesque town somewhat like Trinidad's Port-of-Spain, and much better than Kingstown, still it does not come up to expectation.

The island, however, has never failed to leave its favorable imprint, since it has so many associations with the glorious past, while it is a mine of human interest. Having lived in overcrowded, densely populated Java for a number of years, it was quite natural for me to show a more than casual traveler's interest in Barbados, whose problems, at least those of density of population, are equally complicated. In common with distant Java, every available foot of ground, with identical black volcanic soil and reddish clay from

the ocean bed, is carefully cultivated. This brings to my mind what our great Emancipator once so quaintly said to one who spoke disparagingly of the mass of his fellow citizens, that "the Lord must love the common people, since he made so many of them." By this same token so respectfully uttered by Abraham Lincoln, the Barbadians must be a highly favored people, since there are such great numbers of them. In fact, when the limited area (twenty-one miles in length, fourteen in breadth) is taken into consideration, one often stands aghast and wonders how it is humanly possible to give shelter and happiness to so many of God's children in such a small area.

By way of comparison, Java, six hundred and sixty miles long and with a maximum breadth of one hundred and thirty miles, supports a population of some fifty-one millions, which results in a density of seven hundred and seventeen people per square mile, which is considerable. But Barbados outnumbers Java in its density, for it averages eleven hundred per square mile, which is phenomenal! How it is at all possible for so many human beings to find room to live, to say nothing of making a living, on so small a subdivision of this wide world of ours, is a problem that cannot fail to arouse the astonishment of even the most hardened statistician.

Yet there seemed to be plenty to do in this coral island that has the distinction of having been under unbroken British rule for almost three centuries, even though the Barbadians do not present the appearance of possessing the sumptuous wealth that they had less than a century ago. Nevertheless, with sugar its large staple commodity, and a few others profiting now from better world markets, it has been able to hold its own. Scattered throughout the island are its hundreds of sugar mills, each with a yield so small that one would imagine they could be easily concentrated into one or two large sugar mills. Still, such a state of affairs is easily explained, since in Barbados the individual owners actually reside on the plantation and the industry, in many cases, has just become one large family affair. Lately, however, and quite wisely, moves have been made towards centralization of many of the mills, and these apparently have met with sufficient success. I presume that at Barbados the labor problem had something to do with all this

small industrial ownership business too, and I wonder whether they paralleled conditions in the island of Java where the Fiscus and the trade had been reluctant at industrializing such industries as sugar and rice growing, preferring to leave well enough alone. Tampering with these age-old methods that would put so many millions of natives out of work who for centuries have husbanded the fields in slow and easy-going manner with antiquated implements, might result in a major revolution.

In common with the rest of the islands, Barbados' history has had long chapters of uninterrupted prosperity when the small coral island was overflowing with riches, and when it had a great number of millionaire planters, whose sumptuous mansions were the talk of the rest of the West Indian islands. Even when emancipation came and brought the freedom of the slave, Barbados, most surprisingly of all, did not suffer with the rest of them from the colored man's sudden rise to ownership, nor from its attendant psychological repercussions. The planters continued to reap the fruit from the bounty and the colored folk, in as dense a throng as they are today, quickly reconciled themselves to the new state of free labor. Unlike elsewhere with their colored brethren in neighboring islands, who cultivated on their own account and had a taste with all its responsibilities of what it actually means to be one's own master, here every acre of arable land is tenanted and firmly owned. Hence Barbados quite fortunately witnessed no slave upheaval such as occurred elsewhere in the Caribbean.

But as there is a limit to everything, even to prosperity that seems after all to come and run in cycles, the Saturnian age and the prosperity of the Barbados planters were short lived. The introduction of bounty-fed beet sugar toppled the age of cane and completely altered the story. Ruin, like a blight or plague of African locusts, struck the island and left a trail of ruined planters in its wake. Today, due to the introduction of more modern methods and general improvement in world economic conditions and the better price commanded for the raw staple, the islanders have been given much-needed resuscitation, so that they have weathered the economic storms, though never again presenting the halcyon days of yore. This is no doubt due to the very good reason that there is far too much congestion and the subsistence level of wages is far

too low. Besides there is too much poverty while the sense of values and distribution of wealth are hopelessly out of joint.

Descriptions that have come to my notice of the earlier days of Barbados made interesting reading, especially the keen observations of a certain Master Richard Ligon, who resided at Barbados about the year 1649. Said he: “. . . the island's eastern part was studded with plantations, some large, others small, which as the voyager sailed into Carlisle Bay, rose one above the other as in terraces. Cultivated lands were set round with the woods of the virgin forest which still abounded and conspicuous amidst which towered unbrageous boughs of the silk cotton tree. The houses of the chief planters appeared from seaward like castles and their sugar houses and Negroes' huts looked like so many small towns each defended by its own castle. The warlike appearance of the great houses arose from the fact that many of them were built in the manner of fortifications, having lanes, bulwarks and bastions, for defense of the planters in case of rising amongst the servants or Negro slaves. Carlisle Bay itself presented a busy scene, with Dutch and English vessels lying at anchor. Quite like the stir below London Bridge in those days [1649].

“The chief town of the island was at that period known as St. Michael's Town, but in common speech was called the ‘Bridge’ or the Indian Bridge, from a long bridge which in the earliest days had been thrown across the Indian River, which latter was a sluggish stream that emptied itself into Carlisle Bay. The Bridge was a very sickly place, owing to the lagoons back of the town, and continued to be unhealthy until this year. Still, men built dwelling-houses and storehouses there and, notwithstanding calentures and rheums and such-like ailments besetting its denizens, the capital of the colony was a busy, prosperous place. There was an Exchange Place where the merchants and planters, Dutch and British alike, met one another to transact their common business, and especially to buy and sell sugar—both white and muscovados (brownish sugar)—fustick wood, ginger, tobacco, cotton, wool and indigo which were the produce of the colony. Also, such articles as were imported from abroad for the needs of the colonists and which embraced everything from coppers, taches, goudges and sockets, linenes and woolens, victuals of all kinds, swords and shoes, down to capers and beer. . . . And although gold pieces might some-

times be brought to the island," Ligon continued in his "History of Barbados," "by vessels that had been trading with the Spanish Main, the currency of the colony was established in so many pounds of sugar, tobacco or of cotton. Fines imposed in Courts of Justice were so paid and they were also so imposed. Barter likewise was often resorted to. It was therefore quite an ordinary thing to sell the remaining time of a Christian servant and receive goods in exchange."

This same Ligon gives us an amusing instance of such transactions, although, as he said: ". . . this case was an exceptional kind. There was a planter in the island, that came to his neighbor and said to him, 'Neighbor, I hear you have lately brought good store of servants, out of the last shippe that came from England. And I hear, withal, that you want provisions. I have great want of a woman servant, and would be glad to make exchange; if you will let me have some of your woman's flesh, you shall have some of my hog's flesh'; so the price was a groat a pound [small change] for the hog's flesh and six pence for the woman's flesh.¹ The scales were set up and the planter had a maid that was extremely fat, lazie and good for nothing. Her name was Honour. The man brought a great fat sow, and put it on one scale and Honour was put in another; but when he saw how much the maid outweighed his sow, he broke off the bargain and would not go on."

Thus it was in good old Barbados, about twenty-five years after the Courteens had come to "plant" the island, in the year 1649, when sugar was already King and worth its price in woman's flesh. And now for a picture of the island as it is today.

As has been my habit for years, we had started long before day-break because it is only then that the early bird catches the worms (although I have never been able to catch any worms). It is at that early hour that one sees native life in all its diversified glory. The early morning hours in the tropics are really the better ones to do one's traveling or sight-seeing in. There is less dust, less glare, less smell and less noise and the air is balmier. However, Bridgetown at this hour was a busy beehive, what with the hucksters folk in neatly starched attire balancing oblong trays laden

¹ Author's note: It appears that in Ligon's day woman's flesh seemed to fetch less than animal's flesh.

with produce for the market on their heads, beside mule and donkey carts and that strange contraption called the spider, composed of two large wheels between which dangled kegs of syrup and rum. It is in these early mornings too that one may see on Bridgetown's high roads and lanes groups of country women with starched dress, reefs taken in below the waist, stalking beneath heavy head-loads of garden produce to market, there to squat in jolly chatter. In all the world there is nothing more graceful than the carriage of these native women. Their stride is long and very regular, their carriage is erect and they swing along with free and easy motion, heads high, chest flung forward and arms swinging with unconscious abandon and freedom, in fine, presenting an example of graceful strength.

Jogging along, we passed the famous Bridgetown Club, popular for its fried flying fish, curried sea eggs, and the green Barbados swizzle cocktail; we traipsed through Trafalgar Square, where Nelson's puppet-like bronze statue was neatly stationed in a garden, and the very narrow Broadstreet, as far as the da Costa stores, until we stopped at St. Michael's Cathedral, a large edifice of limestone rock and, so it was rumored, erected from the proceeds of a lottery. Dawdling along, we halted before the Parliament Building, attracted by the stained-glass portraits of the English Kings of the last three centuries. You can understand my surprise when I discovered the mug of the puritanical Cromwell reposing peacefully beside the refined countenance of Charles the First. History surely showed its most cynical visage. Wending our way past the imposing public buildings, a mile or so away from Trafalgar Square, we came to the fifty-acre Savannah Club at St. Ann's, formerly the site of the guardroom, headquarters of the troops, whose building, now quite pretentious and adorned with lofty minaret, is not only the favorite meeting place for the "social lights" in quest of bridge or a swizzle or two, or three, and often more, of rum, but also the parade ground and favorite polo, cricket and tennis ground for both sexes.

Throughout it all, yet not in such profusion as elsewhere in the West Indies, fruit and flowers of all hues and colors attract one's eye. These include the pink and scarlet hibiscus, cocoanut, breadfruit, pawpaw, sea grapes, mango and lime, palms and banana of

large and small dimensions, and avocados. Nor must I forget to mention the venomous Manchineel tree, whose flower fragrance is but a sham; rather like another Lorelei, for its juice is poison and its effect a constant danger to the skin. Once outside Bridgetown and rolling along its glaring and good, snow-white network of roads, systematically marked by road numbers yet curiously enough without sign posts, and where in days gone by ox carts laden with sugar cane must have lumbered their way, we had actually started to "do" Barbados Island. Leisurely driving through the doll-like villa section of this rare pearl in King George's Crown, while the sweet-scented and resuscitating trade wind wafted over us, we decided to take the Atlantic side of the island out, to return by way of the Caribbean.

Years ago—long before my visit to Barbados—I had been tipped off that Barbados is different from the rest of the islands, because the major portion is uneventful, except for the northeastern part, the Scotland section, which is mighty picturesque, and even knotted at times. The island is not mountainous, but beautiful just the same in sections. No wonder that Englishmen like it, and even without much tropical appearance it is in sections reminiscent of a good old English countryside. Pleasant excursions are to be had in all directions, all depending on how much time one has and what sort of traveling one cares to do. Traversing the island, cutting it almost in half, a most exhilarating view of the whole is revealed from a hillcrest which bears the romantic-sounding name of Chimborazo; while beneath, at the northeast coast, glitters the Biblical-named township, Bathsheba—which is actually a peaceful and somnolent place where bathing is superb, and whose primitive earthenware is made from a chalk of a neighboring mount. It is from Bathsheba that a well-known fishing fleet, in quest of the delectable flying fish for which the hotels have become renowned, sets out and returns to port. These flying-fish tidbits, which abound in these waters in myriad swarms, when steamed or properly fried, are a true gastronomic delight. The sea around Barbados, by the way, whether one goes on the western side that is washed by the Caribbean, or to the eastern or Atlantic side that is open to trade winds, is simply breath-taking, as far as diversity is concerned, and

teems with an avalanche of dangerous but highly picturesque colored reefs.

It is at the eastern side of the island that we may enjoy some excellent surf bathing in the Atlantic, such as at Crane's, while at the Aquatic or Yacht Club (where the almost warm seawater displays a gorgeous light green color) bathing is equally superb. Here, though, one is forewarned of an often strong undercurrent, but such a thing should not deter one, since this is found also all along our own Jersey and Atlantic shores.

From Bathsheba a delightful drive brings one to Hackleton's Cliff, a mere thousand feet in height, yet affording a view of the Windward side of the island, and of the rugose Northland, or Scotland, district, that is beyond description.

As a matter of fact, from every eminence, or from almost all the easterly situated hilltops, new vistas burst forth, and it soon becomes apparent why Barbados has been compared to one great sugar estate. Every acre of the tillable land, as far as human eye can travel, seems to have been broken by the plow, and I believe I am not exaggerating when I say that, except for those spots of ground occupied by dwellings or consecrated to the burial of the dead, Barbados is one grand cane field in a state of perfect cultivation. Sugar cane seems to grow everywhere—on hill tops so steep that in appearance they reminded me of the irrigated rice slopes of the Preanger, Java highlands, while so small an area of the entire compass remains unplanted that one wonders now how the harrow could have been driven across the slope. Sugar seemed even to cling to shelf and rock. It ripened close to the sea, where the occasional windmills were wont to remind me of my native Holland as they creaked and turned in the refreshing trade wind. I thought it a pity that these old stand-bys, pictorial delights in Barbados scenery, and so prominent an aid, driven by the northeast trade wind, had to be nudged out for more dependable motordriven mills when twentieth-century products of genius encroached upon Mother Nature's liberal bounty.

But back again to Hackleton's Cliff, near which is the old Church of St. John's. Here lie the remains of the last of the Christian emperors of Constantinople, Ferdinando Palaeologus. We come to Codrington College, the institute for higher education, over-

looking the Windward coast and located at the apex of an avenue which is bordered with stately cabbage palms. Here was once the residence of Christopher Codrington, who bequeathed his estates, now known as the College and Society, to the Society for the Propagation of the Christian Religion in Foreign Parts, and in trust for the sheltering and maintenance of a convenient number of professors and scholars.

For further details of Codrington, and the college that he endowed, which in some respects reminded me of the new structures at Magdalen College at Oxford, as well as for the trials and tribulations of the family tomb of the late Colonel Chase, near Oistens town, and that of Ferdinando Palaeologus, I refer to the descriptions by Sir Algernon Aspinall, so that I shall forego that pleasure.

I spoke before of the Crane Hotel, which is located on the edge of a cliff about a hundred or so feet above the beach, and where many of you readers and travelers would delight to stay, if only for the excellent bathing that is to be had here. From Crane's, a pleasant trip may be made to Beachy Head and to the adjacent Long Bay or Sam Lord's Castle, built originally in 1780 but rebuilt forty years later, or to the adjacent Ragged Point, a rugged, rocky promontory where, according to legend, ships were drawn to their doom on Cobblers' reef before the advent of the lighthouse. Its original owner, to quote this legend, had an ingenious but fiendish way of using lamps, which, attached to cocoanut trees, would sway in the breeze, and cause the vessels to be wrecked on the reef. Once such an event occurred, it would be followed by a grand assault on the part of the malevolent wreckers lying in wait upon the reef, with the result that the disabled ship would be unceremoniously spoliated of all its stock and cargo. Whether the legend is true, or whether it borders on unreality, is not for me to say. It may easily be a fancifully embroidered traveler's tale. But the fact remains that the luxuriously appointed house, that with all its appurtenances resembles a castle, is surely worthy of a visit.

Leaving Codrington College, with its highly serene surroundings, that truly may be called the buttered side of Barbados' bread, one finds the unbuttered side, that of a certain section of the island not so palatable to the taste. I am referring now to Barbados' northern section, by the Windward coast, the barren and rocky

Scotland district, and specifically to that ethnologic curiosity known as the Red Legs. These Red Legs are whites, untainted by colored blood, and they present one of the most shocking aspects of our so-called civilization, although this is meant in no manner as an affront to Barbados.

For the reader to understand what these Red Legs, whose case now knows no parallel, actually were, it becomes necessary again to delve just once more into our history books. From what, up to now, I have written, it becomes apparent that Barbados' history has been quite momentous and has materially affected that of the old British Empire. We already know that navigation laws led to English supremacy of the seas, but Barbados may indirectly have been the cause that led to these navigation laws. It was one of the first colonies where Blighty planted its flag, and it also may have been the first sod in the British Empire where sugar cane was planted. It was also here that many, attached to the royal cause during England's civil war, sought asylum until the Barbadians' opposition to Cromwell's mandates roused this waspish, blasphemic, bludgeonous Puritan's ire and vengeance, with the result that eventually his wrath of Jehovah also fell on neighboring rebellious places. In the end the flag of conciliation was raised and superficial grievances were removed.

Further, in the older years, when the digging of the "big ditch" ushered in a new and eventful historic epoch, Barbados' colored folk, forty thousand strong, helped Colonel Goethals to dig the Panama Canal. When at last mischievous war lords began to explode after a restless period of sputter and backfire that culminated in a world conflagration, thousands of brave Barbadians fought and died as England's most loyal subjects in this war, which became also their war for Blighty. Yet, with all these people's noble characteristics of loyalty and achievement throughout three centuries, it is almost an anachronism to find in this civilized and modern island, out of the social phenomena of the time, mute testimony to Oliver Cromwell.

Now, enlightened moderns, among whom are many travelers who have chronicled their findings in travel books, have been inclined, and not without reason, to look upon these Red Legs, the white victims of Cromwell's bloody epoch and vengeance, with

more than scorn and less than sympathy. One should be more lenient, however, when one knows the circumstances. One should not overlook the fact, as some sort of rear-guard action in defense, that hundreds of these captives, Irish, Scotch and English, men and women among whom were also followers of Monmouth, and rebels all, were piled in noisome, stinking holds of convict ships. Some of these men had been sentenced for the smallest of offenses. Others even preferred slavery in Barbados to persecution by Cromwell in England. Hence they were transported in the years evolving around 1635, like their equally unfortunate colored contemporaries, to Barbados. Those that survived the ravages of such a voyage were sold as slaves to white planters for the price of fifteen hundred pounds of sugar per head.

You and I, perhaps, in our emotional state, are quite ready to picture their plight as one of sadness and despair, which is a natural conclusion. But at that time these people were not nearly so low in spirit as we are led to believe—for the very plausible reason that life moved at a different pace and tempo, and thoughts of liberty and freedom of labor, bristling with all its attendant plagues of inefficiency, browbeating, absence of conscience and snarls and yaps, had not come upon the world. And besides, slavery, all kinds of slavery, was considered a natural phenomena of those times, as natural as it was to see a man publicly hanged.

In Barbados, at the time when the warring factions in Cromwell's time were killing each other as rapidly as they saw fit, there were sympathizers of both factions. Possibly many of these unfortunate Red Legs (so called because of their red kilts, or their bare knees that were reddened by wind and sun) fell into kindly hands. Many of them also rose to be affluent planters. But there was another lot, who were less endowed with grit, good fortune and the pluck to stick it out and keep their chins up. It was this lot that has eaten humble pie and drank the cup of humiliation to the dregs ever since.

They were branded and mutilated like cattle and treated with far less humanity and with greater brutality than their African colored brethren. Although such horrible outrages were representative of the spirit of the period, they were unable to withstand them, along with the grueling field labor beneath the hot

tropic sun, with the result that many of them succumbed, which may have been the very fate they would have preferred for themselves. Others, somewhat more hardened, survived, and it is to the offsprings of these degraded, hopeless, mayhap spineless, yet unadulterated people, that one's attention is invariably drawn when exploring the Scotland district. They were hated at the time, when the devil was a thing very much alive, just as the unbalanced Hitlerites hate the Jews, and for practically the same good reason—no reason at all. After all, isn't it often true that the greatest fights ensue—for no reason at all?

So these Red Legs, the sin of Oliver Cromwell, have become the sore spot of the island, a dejected, light-haired, fair-skinned lot who, in this northland portion of Barbados, carry on their existence on a social plane almost as low as the lowliest of Barbados' colored folk.

Still, we should not be too harsh or hasty in our judgment, because we have not been entirely without that blight in America. Retrace with me our glorious historic pages and stop somewhere about the time when the Dutch colony of Nieuw Amsterdam was founded. Here the earlier colonists, often thought and represented to be the salt of the Dutch earth, were, as you may not remember, sometimes recruited in Holland from the lowest strata of Holland society.

These earlier Dutch recruits were a strange lot, and the religious liberty that had made Holland almost proverbial as a haven for the oppressed did not always prevail in their new fatherland. It is common knowledge that a black slave scourge had budded with the advent of a Dutch privateer, who appeared at Jamestown in 1619, offering for sale the first known twenty Negro slaves (which, to keep the records straight, had been "borrowed" from a Spanish slave ship). But not many of us may actually know that we had our white slaves in America too. They were then known as indentured slaves, and were bound to servitude for a stated number of years to their white masters. Many of them, particularly the redemptioners, as they were then called, had sold themselves into four years of slavery simply as a means of escape, or to secure their fare across. Many more of them, however, were convicts, deported from Great Britain.

The motive for indenture was at that time considered highly respectable. It was reasoned that the indenture of convicts was purely and simply prompted by a charitable impulse, and the Puritans of that hypocritical age actually believed that they were very kind indeed to these offenders. The slightest misdemeanor, such as stealing a loaf of bread, was punishable with death, so that many a judge, almost moved to crocodile tears at his having to impose such a severe sentence, would, while raising his pious eyes to Heaven, suggest slavery as the lesser penalty. He then ordered the men or women to be deported as convicts to the colonies. Many were given their choice of hanging or serving as indentured slaves, and, even then thinking much of their skins, preferred the latter.

Thus many of these petty larcenists and minor thieves, and also many rogues of the first order (except those convicted of arson, murder and rape) replenished and embellished our early population with their presence. This often makes me wonder whether some of the seed then so generously sown did not, in its germinating process, to a certain extent develop into the plant from which flowered the racketeer and many others with criminal tendencies in our present era.

Now, it would be a mistake to believe that all of our forefathers were in favor of receiving that blight into their midst. Our colony of Maryland was one that received them, however, though not with open arms. They came in ever-increasing numbers, thousands of these convict slaves—whites at that—replenishing the then (I speak now of the year 1760) youthful colony. Apropos of this, I should interpolate that many of these indentured arrivals were not convicts, but merely kidnaped boys and girls who were also sold. As for the price that was paid for these youthful unfortunates, a price of twenty pounds was average for a white slave, or bond servant, as they were also called. It may not be generally known that George Washington had his indentured or bonded servants, who were all of the convict class, as records show, and that even while he was President he seemed interested in replenishing his household and estate with this human cargo.

Thus, upon reading the above, it may be understood that my feelings while observing the Barbados Red Legs were quite mixed. They were interesting because of the fact that they reminded me

in some instances of the Cha-Chas of St. Thomas, or the peoples of Saba, although the latter two, sociologically, stand on a different rung of civilization's ladder.

Strange sensations moved me as I conversed with some of these people while they labored half-heartedly in their garden plots, or lolled about the doors of their hovels. Their stories seemed almost incredible in this day and age of advancement. I could not believe the evidence of my eyes and ears that here was a white people, without the least trace of miscegenation, and thus without the slightest speck of colored blood, maintaining their purity of race and hanging on to good old family names, as untainted as yours and mine, who yet were on a sociological plane with that of the lowliest inhabitant. In this manner they have lived for more than two centuries, since the time when white slaves were the order of the day—a living reproach to the vile institutions that once were thought of so highly in a puritanical age.

Now the Red Legs may, if they so desire, move in society wherever they wish. But they do not wish to. They are honest, deeply religious, to the point of mania, and of a high moral quality. But their breasts are filled with resentment against their white brethren and the colored folk alike. They just keep on sticking to their own plot and their own immediate surroundings, asking only to be left alone, though they are barely able to eke out a meager existence. When I asked a Red Leg woman, whose freckled albino-like face and bloodshot eyes were quite repelling, and who was pottering aimlessly about her hovel, whether she had ever harbored the thought of moving away from there, away to town, she looked at me all agog, with the eyes starting out of her head. She informed me in a listless voice that she had no desire to go there, and, besides, she had never been away from her plot. She had never seen the Barbadian metropolis, a distance of barely fourteen or fifteen miles away, or, by way of comparison, a journey as long as from the Battery to Van Cortlandt Park, in New York City.

In other words, it seemed to me that they seemed to fear a separation, if only a temporary one, from their own little plots of ground, just as much as they feared the visitation of the evil spirits. In defeating their emotions, as these white Red Legs did, it was easy to realize that this metamorphosis, or rather this very sublima-

tion of soul, might or would have led to other psychological defects. It was not strange therefore for me to discover that close intermarriage and other practices occurred, nor could it be entirely otherwise with a people similarly isolated that adhere so strictly to an abhorrence of intimacy with anyone bearing even the faintest stigma of color. Had they been otherwise constituted, they would have succumbed long years ago to the inroads of colored intermarriage. But while such intermarriage and illegitimacy, due to the religious fanaticism and puritanism of their upbringing, and despite its multitude of custom-dictated requirements and superstitions, are something unheard of in their midst, a strange paradox is the fact that, notwithstanding their abomination of the colored folk, they are not averse to accepting employment from them. When they do, they perform their work well; but once the work is done, they retreat once more within their hard and immovable shell. A close examination of this phenomenon, of course, stunned me; but then I reflected that, after all, people have to live, and a colored man's honest penny is as good as anyone's shilling.

No one has so far made any attempt at regenerating these victims; or perhaps there have been faint-hearted attempts, of which the grotesque college, bearing the Codrington name, "*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*," is an example. I wondered whether any attempt has ever been made by that institution to try to improve the spiritual outlook on life of these white peoples, and whether the big Sachems of Barbados have ever done anything toward improving their physical lot.

I motored away from the simple confines of St. Andrew's and St. Lucy's parishes, in this Scotland north country, where these strange, coarse and law-abiding enigmatic folks lived. There, luxury and the most degrading squalor live practically side by side, for, but a mere fifteen miles away, are the sumptuous residential districts of Hastings, St. Lawrence and Worthing, and the palatial Hastings and Marine Hotel, where luxury, as well as modern twentieth-century fast life, holds sway.

Just when the attractions of the island seemed about at an end, I decided to pay a visit to the animal flower cave which, so I had heard from a traveler, could compare favorably with those I had seen in Polynesia. This cave, or caves, since there are many, is

located at the extreme north of the island, in St. Lucy's parish, from which I had recently come; so back I went again. The motorcar ride was not too long and turned out to be a most enjoyable expedition, past sugar plantations and Nicholas Abbey (not really an Abbey but a house, and the only one in Barbados which sports chimneys and a fireplace). It led to a spacious rocky plain, from which a short walk brought me to the cave. The entrance fee was one shilling, and the visit was well worth it.

One enters by means of a sort of makeshift stairway into one of the many caves. Its roof is covered with stalactites and its floor with stalagmites, which latter are formed by the water drippings from above. The cave's entire surface seemed alive and flowering like a garden with the myriad shapes and forms of anemones, fantastic brilliantly colored little sea animals, and innumerable pale worms, snails and sea lilies, with waving plumes of weed and moss. From the aperture fronting the staircase, I beheld a far vista of narrow belts of gleaming water under a soft sun and the contour of the mainland.

During calm weather the water on the other side of the caves is as smooth as a sheet, but otherwise the ceaseless ocean wash splashes its salty foam against the rocks. On the whole, the place reminded me of Hato Cave, at Curaçao, yet, while the latter is magnificent in its scabrous stupendity, the marine gardens at Barbados are the more beautiful of the two.

For there is nothing more beautiful than the wonderful world of marine animals that Homer called a glorious gift of Mother Nature. Here, on the coral-decked floor of the cave, they astonished the gaze with their weird shapes and brilliant colors. Partly attached to the bottom, they bear perfect likeness to flowerbeds and shrubs, and present the most perfect replica of a garden, but unlike any garden you have ever beheld. Now that I come to think of it, they reminded me somewhat of the coral gardens that I visited on my peregrinations through the Moluccas at Ambon and octopus-shaped Celebes, particularly around Macassar. Of course, we may see much of this beauty in our own aquaria, except that in the former we have nature, instead of art, a primeval wood, instead of a diminutive pleasure ground.

The branched corals reminded me of diminutive forests, while

the more compact species were the table lands, the hills and mountainous regions covered by a foliage and dense masses of a mauve or purplish hue. I also perceived a kind of sea feather, a coral that stood forth in bold relief and that raised, high above its surroundings, its perfectly fringed shaft, carved, as it were, with microscopic accuracy. Each of its minute plumules was the refuge place of hundreds of the tiny polyps that seem to provide for this coral family, functioning to secure food so that it may be kept alive and reproduce. The single delicate sea roses or sea anemones, with their brilliantly colored tentacles, often with a strange gloss or sheen, appear like some sort of iridescent mica glass. Then there are the marigolds and the chrysanthemums, and so on.

But again, beauty seemed to be skin deep or, as Socrates would have said it, "Beauty is a short-lived tyranny," or better, "a silent cheat," to borrow from friend Theophrastus. For, innocent and beautiful as these darlings look to the eye, they are a bunch of gangsters, a band of rapacious hungry rascals, who are not what they seem. Pity the unconcernedly swimming fish, and woe to the unsuspecting crustacean, once they become entangled in the fangs of, or exposed to, those pretty wreaths. At once hundreds of mouths will open to gobble the victims up, and thousands of tiny poisoned daggers will adhere to their struggling bodies. With the aid of the fangs, or tentacles, the half-dead animals are pulled into the fatal nucleus, the center of the calyx. And then the worst is to begin, for hungry mouths will do the rest, devouring and transmitting the unhappy sea denizens to the stomach of the blossom, which forms the center of the axis of the flower stem.

A very good lesson could be drawn from this marine garden, one that proves over and over again that while our Mother Nature with bountiful hand displays and distributes her beauty she is at the same time a destroyer as well. Hence the name of marine *garden* ought to be justifiable in an aesthetic way only, because its beauty is deceitful and treacherous.

And now, having reached about the end of the Barbados chapter, in so far as it relates to sight-seeing, I am mindful of what Joseph Conrad, my friend, and the object of my admiration, once said to the effect that "any man can carry on, but only the wise man knows how to shorten sail." Wherefore, I shall confine the rest of

these pages to a dissection of the general characteristics of the white and the colored folk residing there.

In general they present a situation comparable to that of whites and colored in the other islands, yet there is a great difference once you look more closely under the surface. The whites, who for the most part constitute Englishmen, need very little description. You may find their prototypes in almost every colony where the British rule, or in their very homes in England. I refer, of course, to the type that considers himself not at all the least important member of *homo sapiens* on this planet. In common with the French, the Dutch, and other nationals who live abroad or in the colonies, his life to a great extent has become metamorphosed, or West Indianized. Yet, having lived in places where the British rule supreme, in Africa, Malacca Straits, Hongkong, or in the British West Indian Islands, I found the Englishman, no matter where he hangs his socks, rising punctiliously at six to breakfast at ten, lunch at one or two and dine, in the indispensable evening jacket, at seven.

To return to the Barbados son of Blighty, his food is just what it is in jolly old England, even to the extent of his piece of mutton and mint sauce, however tastelessly prepared. His house is built in bungalow fashion. His complexion is delightfully tanned, but his women are pale-faced, and not always the most agreeable ones to meet. They dress in fashions that lack taste, even though their clothes often are of expensive Paris or London make. In common with the agreeably well-proportioned and buxom Dutch women in the colonies, they suffer, with the exception of the very young set, from a total absence of physical exercise and mental recreation.

Of course, there are many exceptions to this, and in spite of these small follies and questionable tastes, many of the colonists prove to be exceptionally fine company. As I once wrote about the Dutch planters in the East Indies, once away from the narrow-minded, stilted and old-fashioned land of their fathers, their eyes twinkle with mirth and laughter and even their proverbially tight-drawn purse strings relax. It is equally so with the sons of "perfidious Albion," once they are away from home. They too become good sports, jolly good fellows and ultra-hospitable, while shedding some

of that haughtiness and tempering their innate racial pride somewhat.

The Barbados whites, and incidentally the colored folk, are very English, and Barbados' nickname of "Little England" tickles the cockles of their loyal-beating hearts. They are extremely proud of their association with old England, and though they prefer to live nowhere else in the world but in Barbados, they are willing to go through hell and die for Blighty, when the occasion demands. They are equally proud of that rare piece of paper, their Charter, or Constitution, that rightfully makes this island so different from the rest of the Caribbean spots. For their Constitution provides for a House of Assembly, consisting of twenty-four members, and a Legislative Council of Nine, with the Governor as its chief executive sitting comfortably at the top.

At this point I should like to present a more minute inspection of the difficulties adherent to the colored element in Barbados. It was fortunate indeed that in the course of time, and, of course, distinctly attributable to the emancipation of the slaves, the whole social structure of the West Indies in general and of Barbados in particular has changed. Before the Emancipation, the story of the colored people, wherever slave labor was in force, was nothing but a ruthless system of exploitation of the many by the few—a bloody tale of fear-driven laborers toiling in gangs under a murderously tyrannical slave driver or overseer. This was the system that was the basis for the sugar-production industry of the island.

According to the definition of Moreau de St. Méry in his "Description Topographique, etc., de l'Isle Saint Domingue" (published at Philadelphia in 1797-98), colored slaves were recruited from the various African tribal stocks (good, bad and very indifferent), in all stages of development. The increase in miscegenation between colored and white, and the correspondingly continuous increase in mulatto offspring, provided additional confusion to a situation already sufficiently complex. Since all efforts at balancing the white with the colored element failed most dismally, it is a perhaps not unnatural result that in Barbados today we have the well-nigh incredible situation of a population of close to 180,000 persons, of which 170,000 are colored and only 10,000 white!

Group cohesion among the West Indians of colored descent has

been practically impossible, for the British themselves have done very little, if anything, to help matters. Rather, to be more exact, they actually have driven a wedge of cleavage and have drawn fine hair-lines of demarcation between the various classes of the colored people.

I have been strongly impressed by a distinctive feature inherent in the colored Barbadian, and that is his ardent local patriotism. By the same principle which states that it is braver to be brave when you are afraid, the West Indian Negro, in my opinion, shows more patriotism, more sincere love of his homeland, than does his white countryman. The latter is the lordly heir to all the ages; the former, though he is the forgotten stepchild, dangling on the fringes of a grudging sufferance, yet loves his land. As with us in the States, where the Negro has become an American citizen, the West Indian Negro regards himself as an Englishman in the English, a Frenchman in the French, a Dutchman in the Dutch and a Spaniard in the Spanish islands. Particularly is this true of the Barbadian. First and foremost he is a Barbadian, but secondly he takes pride in being part and parcel of the great British Empire. However, at one time, especially in the earlier days after emancipation, many thousands of Negroes were unable to keep themselves shackled to the grinding wheels of Imperial propaganda and, refusing to be exploited any longer by their white overlords, they emigrated to North and South America, where they were soon immersed in the newer melting-pots of those nations.

With regard to the characteristics of the Barbadian colored people, I truly believe them to be some sort of phenomena. By this I mean that they are vastly different from the other colored peoples with whom I have come in contact in many far places. They are remarkable because anything may be made of them. They are clannish, strong and robust, though requiring treatment with a firm hand. Poverty and idleness may cause them to stray from the straight and narrow path and may lead them also to a great deal of immorality and sexual aberrations, but I think it may be granted without argument that herein they differ little from both white or colored humans anywhere else on this planet.

Those among them that are endowed with better mental faculties, or have acquired more proficiency, have attained a commen-

surate standing among their fellow-men. Many have become peasant proprietors or hold supervising jobs; others are sailors, engineers and mechanics, and they supply the government with a large proportion of the tax revenues. On the other hand many of them also are allowed to starve, without any noticeably violent arousal of sympathy. It is this side of Barbados which provides an ugly picture of the shocking conditions which exist among part of the colored population. It is a picture so appalling that, were it not for the fact that we have become inured to similar spectacles of human misery and degradation right here in our own Southern states, we would wonder in incredulous disbelief that such conditions could exist. Many of these unfortunate colored people live in dismal little huts and their work could well be called the work of scavengers. In view of the fact, too, that they are forced to sustain themselves and their families on a meager pittance of fifty cents a day, the squalor of their living conditions is obviously not to be wondered at.

Another aspect in the picture of the lives of these colored Barbadians which causes great concern is that of the high percentage of illegitimacy. This percentage is indeed staggering, but, again, no higher than in many other places where the colored population is in predominance. I never believed that there could be so many of "God's lil chillun" as there are in Barbados! However, it occurred to me, in connection with this great prevalence of illegitimacy in Barbados, that the laws of sex morality are just as deplorably lax in the rest of the Caribbean Islands. For example, in the American Virgin Islands the number of illegitimate children reached such staggering proportions that the censors introduced a most novel classification—listing certain members as "married," or censorably married, solely for the purpose of census-taking.

This brings me to a viewpoint that is indeed most interesting to a student of races, and that of the colored race in the West Indian Islands in particular. Due to the diversity in character, physique and mental and spiritual outlook on life, of the tribes from which they originated, and due also to the variance of localization in the West Indian Islands, the colored people differ greatly among themselves, having added to their basic traits those distinctive of the white races whose charges they are. Cookery, food, manners of

living and the ardent spirit of patriotism, of which I have spoken, naturally are some of the cardinal factors. Thus I observed, while sojourning in Dutch Guiana or in Curaçao, or in the rest of the Dutch-ruled islands, that the colored man in Dutch-controlled colonies has a sturdiness of manner and a sledge-hammer method that leaves no doubt as to which colony and people he belongs. In similar fashion, the French or Martinique colored person is more polished and civilized than those of neighboring islands; the Spanish colored man has incorporated under his dark skin some of the salient characteristics of the Spaniards of the period under which he was a slave. Only the British colored man has remained more or less unimpregnated. He seems to have taken on very little of the attributes of his master, possibly because his master, due to his attitude of aloofness, had very little to give, unless it may have been a superiority complex, and some of that British colonial temperament. It would be interesting but difficult to attempt to analyze this difference in character, and I shall not try to attempt it here, since the complexity of these hidden ways and manners is difficult to explain.

However, to revert once more to the present-day situation of the Negro in Barbados, while many of these colored are poverty-stricken, they are fortunately no longer as degraded and as ignorant as they were in the olden days. This is something distinctly in their favor when one considers that they have had to live amid the most squalid conditions and under the most brutal oppressions. I have witnessed some of this squalor myself while rambling unconventionally beyond the cut-and-dried pathways.

Another phase of this Barbadian situation deals with these people's adoption in some form or other, several years ago, of the Christian faith. Some doubt remains whether the spiritual value of this religion has made any great impression upon them. In common with their brown, yellow and copper-colored brethren, East and West, they have arrived at the rather naive belief that to be a Christian behooves them to wear white man's clothes in a flashy manner, to carry canes and gloves, and, besides, to stoop to the white man's depravities and deceptions. The final and natural result is that they have copied the white man's mannerisms and swank among each other by imitating also the white man's methods

of life, his vices, and especially, his laziness. It is this strange mental and curiously spiritual quirk which often leads to the colored people's lives such an air of unreality and intangibility.

However, aside from their occasional and more or less natural attacks of laziness, there is no room for argument but that no white man living could do what the colored man can do and has done in the fields. In this respect, indolence and reposefulness in tropical climes may compare with strenuousness and speed in Northern climes.

Moreover, it seemed to me that the colored man of Barbados was outstanding in cheerfulness and lightheartedness, and was entirely devoid of that meanness in nature with which one very often associates the colored person. I found him to be of a delightful humor that often becomes infectious. The cares of the world sit very lightly upon his shoulders. He is also a great lover of music, has a fine ear for melody and equally enjoys hearing the sound of his own voice in speech or song, differing therein very little from the rest of the colored world or even from many of his white brethren. I believe that if I had my choice I should often prefer to listen to the colored man's speech and his philosophy.

Apropos of this, our own important Barbados cicerone, whose name was no less historically important, since he was named after Henry Clay (the same Clay who was the father of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850), was a fluent and brilliant speaker. Henry had a perfect command of words, which came flowing out in a turbulent cascade at the rate of a mile a minute, and of which the selection and proper usage might have put the forensic abilities of many of our own orators to shame. He had, in addition, a keenly developed sense of honor, a trait which is not always attributed by us whites to the colored folk, while his humor was priceless and kept both my wife and me most pleasantly entertained.

Being now on the subject of humor, I am reminded of a little story concerning a Negro woman in a small town whose husband had died. In fond memory she dutifully erected a monument to him, and inscribed thereon the following tender sentiment: "The Light of my life has gone out." One year later she took unto herself another husband to console her lonely and bereft bosom. Thereupon, some facetious colored friend, endowed with that

enviable and admirable humor of his race, added to this epitaph the terse comment: "And now I have struck another match!"

It is quite possible for me to conceive, and even to concede, that the foregoing brief impressions of the colored people of Barbados may not appeal to everyone who runs and reads, especially to those who have had so much to do, perhaps with unsatisfactory results, with the children of Ham. Still, whatever their feelings in the matter may be, they should not overlook the fact that a race constantly beset by racial injustices, and by some of the abominations of our so-called "Western culture," must naturally show their resentment by an escape from their inferiority complexes. Nevertheless, I have always found the colored people on the whole endowed with a great innate charm and a profound courtesy. They may often have appeared as taciturnly timid before strangers but once this was overcome by good leadership they emphasized their very excellent qualities.

In fine, the Negro problem in this island or in any other island is no easy one to solve, and may be comparable almost to the half-caste problem that existed, though on a smaller scale, in the island of Java. There was at one time, not much more than a hundred years ago, a minor insurrection of the Negroes then inhabiting the entire land. It was quickly put down, but it remains none the less as a warning of what may happen in these too densely populated places. There are far too many of them in comparison to the white population. There are abject poverty and unemployment, and while emigration might have helped to alleviate the grave question, the Barbadian, not unlike the Javan, is passionately attached to his native hearth, and emigration therefore has proved a distinct failure. Taken all in all, therefore, things do not look too bright for "Little England's" governing white fathers. Time alone can tell what dark clouds may lie ahead for Barbados and the rest of the islands.

Trinidad

THE CRADLE OF THE CHICADEE



MOUNT BENEDICT
TRINIDAD
NOVICIATE HOUSE



MOUNT BENEDICT. TRINIDAD

FIRST BEGINNINGS.

From the New York *Times*—December 12, 1934

The Norwegian liner "Vestvangen" struck a submerged rock off Trinidad Monday and her six passengers were rescued only after long hours adrift in a heavy sea in open boats.

Hendrik de Leeuw, author, sailing the Caribbean in quest of material for a new book, is one of the passengers and cabled the story of the shipwreck from Trinidad.

Story copyrighted 1934 by the New York *Times* Company and Nana Inc.

Port-of-Spain, December 11 (by cable)

Quick thinking by Captain Mattheis Oren saved the liner "Vestvangen," when she struck a submerged rock off Matelot Point, on the Northern Coast of Trinidad.

Ship struck a submerged rock not shown on the British charts. Passengers were ordered into lifeboats. For hours rowed through heavy seas, until picked up late that night by "Austvangen," sister ship of the

Line. Because of heavy seas, difficulty in boarding. "Austvangen" brought us back to Port-of-Spain in good condition, but physically exhausted at an early hour of the morning, next day.

Passengers included, besides the author, Mrs. Bess de Leeuw, also the captain's wife, and daughter, aged 9, Willem Olyslager of the Curaçao Trading Company, headed for San Salvador, J. H. Cabrera representing the American Celcuresol Company.

(The foregoing is a condensed story as cabled to New York *Times* and printed with their permission and that of the North American Newspaper Alliance.)

IN THIS UNCEREMONIOUS FASHION our arrival was heralded at Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, at four-thirty on the morning of December 11, 1934.

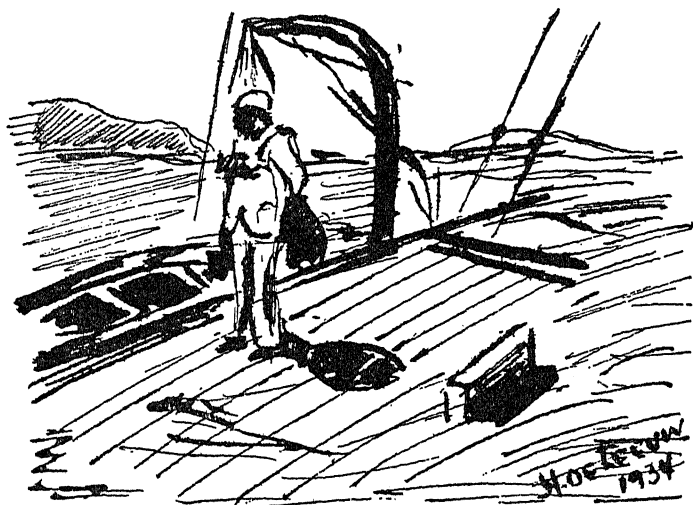
The government launch had come to take us off the Aluminum Liner, the "Austvangen," as the latter lay outside in the roadstead, and in the cool of this tropic morning we were chucked, hale but not so hearty, onto the lighthouse jetty, where custom examination and other ceremonies were promptly and graciously dispensed with.

No tramps, roistering brigands, swashbuckling buccaneers, or the usual odd-looking German globetrotters could have cut a worse, or more comical, figure than we did at this ungodly early hour—though it may be granted in our favor that four-thirty A.M. is a most unusual time to look well upon landing at any place in this mad world.

Dead tired, unkempt and half-starved, after our harrowing experience, the lot of us wasted no time in having swift taxis take us to the Hotel Sand. It was barely five when the charming and motherly manageress, Madame Louise Ansaldi, was roused out of her bed, yet she accorded us a welcome that could not have been any warmer had her own mother, or some long lost brother, knocked at her door. Then came the resuscitative food and hot drinks. If ever a lot of hungry wolves descended upon a feed, we were those wolves. We feasted with diligence, tempered somewhat with discretion, but *après nous le déluge*. Having had our fill of

Proprietor Pierre Sand's delectables, for which his restaurant and hotel is so renowned, practically all of the shipwreckers, by which name we were soon known, dropped by the wayside for a well-earned rest.

Although it is past history with us, I believe it not yet too late to express in this book the sentiment of all who attended that



SHIPWRECKED AT TRINIDAD

early morning feast, and who have since dispersed to the four corners of the earth: No meal ever tasted so good, and the appreciation of the shipwreckers proves again old Wolcot's adage that "the turnpike road to most people's hearts lies through their mouths." My hat goes off to Monsieur Pierre Sand and Madame Louise Ansaldi, who have earned without doubt our everlasting gratitude and respect.

This was by no means my first initiation into the wonders of Trinidad. I had been there before, and I have been there since, although this was the one and only time that I arrived there, or anywhere, in a sort of helter-skelter fashion, as a victim of a shipwreck, however unimportant and devoid of danger it turned out to be. That I had the utmost confidence in the Aluminum Line and its Norwegian skippers and crews who man and operate these

sturdy cargo-passenger boats (chartered by the Mellon-Octopus-Aluminum Trust), is proven by the fact that I subsequently sailed on the Line, not only because of their excellent grub but also for their tastefully appointed and commodious quarters. Another reason was their utter dependability and existing discipline. I say this without reservation, and desire to make it publicly known, nor is this sentiment inspired by any free trips, nor by any reduction of fifty per cent or more on my steamer fare, nor by any gratuity whatever. In other words, I owe them nothing, and vice versa.

Reaching Trinidad, while coming from Dutch or British Guiana (which is but a two days' run), or from the Venezuela Oriente Coast, or hitting port from the Leeward and the Windward Islands, it has practically always been my fortune to strike Galera Point, the northeastern promontory of this great island, at sunrise, which is an aesthetic delight. A night run enables those willing to risk the precious hours otherwise spent in the embracing arms of Morpheus to do a bit of sky-gazing and, while beholding, if I may borrow from Shakespeare, "this majestic roof fretted with golden fire," to investigate the constellations and the Southern Cross. The trip from the Venezuelan coastal towns on board Royal Netherlands liners, en route to Europe from New York, also brings one in very early in the morning, as does the trip on the White Star, Swedish American, Italian, Canadian Pacific, Holland-America, or French Line's luxurious vessels. Unless something unforeseen happens, one makes an early landfall and beholds a spectacle equally enchanting and imposing when arriving on the Royal Netherlands Transatlantic luxury liners from Europe, via Barbados, en route to Curaçao and points west of the Spanish Main. So no matter how you travel, by Furness, or Canadian National, the Lady boats, or the lines above mentioned, you are privileged to pass through the Bocas, the "Dragon Mouths," through these Scyllas and Charybdises, either with the rise of the sun or at an hour that permits you to drink in all its beauty.

Navigating into or negotiating Port-of-Spain's roadstead is not an easy task for the best of skippers, no matter what Boca entrance he essays. There are, for instance, the Boca de Monos, Monkey's Mouth, one of the narrowest sea gates lying to the northwest or southwest of the isle, which may be chosen, depending on the

ship's course. Or, the captain may decide on the other three Bocas, lying to the north, the Boca de Huevos (the Egg Bocas), the Boca de Navios (the Ships' Boca) and the most spacious of them all, the Boca Grande, which lies somewhat out of the way. Besides the above, the captain may also negotiate the Straits, or Bocas del Sierpe, the Serpent mouths, as they are termed, hardly five miles across, which require most cautious navigating, due to their many shallow spots.

Having navigated this passage numberless times, with all sorts of captains and at various hours of the day (including a trip made to the Five Islands and the Bocas on a small government sight-seeing boat, at the price of a couple of shillings), I am not surprised that Columbus and subsequent voyagers found it so difficult to navigate these passages. The very good reason for this difficulty is that the mainland of Venezuela and that of Trinidad proper are identical in configuration and physical appearance, and often coalesce, so that it quite often happens that one is utterly baffled as to where Trinidad begins and the Venezuelan coast ends.

A skipper is not bound by ironclad rules that prescribe when and where he should enter. It becomes more or less discretionary with him alone by which route he wishes to navigate the Bocas, and it is primarily dependent upon the time of day and the current he encounters, which latter, incidentally, is decidedly strong.

His choice depends often enough upon his mood and his sense of, or penchant for, beauty and romance. And most captains, so I have discovered, hide beneath their often grimly cold and matter-of-fact exteriors the same emotions, flavored with a fondness for those aesthetic delights, which distinguish the breasts of other human beings. So I am happy to say that at all times, barring the shipwreck incident, when we made the Bocas at night, I have seen the Bocas in all their glory at daybreak.

Upon coming from Dutch Guiana one reaches the northeastern promontory a little after sunrise and secures a good vista of the island's northern forest and hilly coastline, with its perpendicular cliffs and rounded peaks, among which is Mount Tucuche, some three thousand feet high and rising behind numberless crags and precipices and straggling a line of seething breakers. It was not far from this point and northeastern promontory that the frail dugout

canoes, manned by colored fishermen, made heroic attempts to come to our rescue, going a few miles out from their fishing settlements.

Upon reaching the Boca de Monos, a narrow strait between Entrada Point, the northwest cape of Trinidad and Monos islands, and once through the Boca de Huevos, we sail into the Gulf of Paria, passing many islands on our way. At one place we proceed through such a narrow channel, and so steep and high are the adjacent islands that tower on either side that, almost breathless, afraid lest the luxuriantly verdured rocky precipices topple over, the passengers lean over the ship's rail and just gape. But the vessel dexterously veers from west and then southward, describing a large semicircle and holding a safe course between, until well within the confines of the Gulf, which is about fifteen miles from the sea to Port-of-Spain. This portion of the trip is grand, and while it reminded me at times of our own glorious Hudson, that for scenic beauty is hardly excelled, there still is a difference, as you may discover for yourself.

While the trip above described is true enchantment, nothing could be more sublime than skirting the more rugged and still more romantic eastern coastline. For instance, when, at the break of dawn, the vessel makes the gulf on the route from the north, the island's darkish contour and the grimmish Venezuelan Oriente configuration emerge as if from the muddy, grayish sea. This muddiness replaces the sapphire color and owes its appearance to the detritus from the Orinoco, south. As the ship slowly rides the waves (ten to eleven knots is usually the safe limit), five islands, often described as the islands of the Willow Pattern plate, stand forth in all their beauty and ruggedness, as they cluster midway between the ship's wake and the acclivity of the shore. These islands, called Los Cotorros, or the parrots, and curiously enough sporting the historic nomenclatures of Caledonia, Lenegan, Nelson, Craig and Picton, have a prosaic usefulness too, besides their scenic beauty, since one serves as a penal settlement, another as a quarantine station, and a third as an immigration depot, akin to our own Ellis Island.

Lusher and more romantic still, with the sun rising in all its magnificence over cloud-capped hills, stretching away to the sky,

are the islands on the seaward side. Here and there an occasional spring might be seen cascading down to the shimmering lagoons. It is on this side that Chacachacara, Trinidad's compulsory leper depot, reminiscent of Hawaii's Molokai, is safely cached away, and to which I shall have fuller reference in the pages that follow.

Once well within the Bocas, the tableau assumes a less rugulose and more tenderly tropical perspective, lacinated with a pageant of plumeless nodding palms, white-winged sail boats and intimate beaches, dainty hotels and toy villages, peeping from behind sea-washed crags, and inviting tiny lands and creeks and coves. The whole presents a picture of such intense beauty and variety that it caused Washington Irving to describe it, as he referred to Columbus' impressions, in the following eloquent words: "The softness and purity of the climate and the verdure, the freshness and the sweetness of the country, appeared to Columbus to equal the delights of early spring in the beautiful province of Valencia, Spain."

Westward, in the offing, we behold Patos, or Goose Island, as it is also called, which had figured for a long time as the apple of discord in the brabble between the British and the Venezuelans, with the ultimate victory perching upon the shoulders of the British. As a result of this doubtful triumph they have a watchman, a sort of Timon of Athens, who resides there in solitary splendor, religiously hoisting the symbol of English glory every morning and night.

Continuing to ride the choppy little waves, we come within the lee of Gasperee, also called Gaspar Grande, a very large limestone island that fronts the Monos Strait. It boasts of limestone caves, it is true, but its main attraction really is its delightful bathing resort, together with its hotel and little bungalows, attesting to the island's popularity. While not appearing in any of the travel chronicles and guide books which I have had a chance to peruse, there seems to be another tiny dot on the waters here, seemingly unimportant, except to mariners, of course, who shun it as the clergy would a strip-tease act. It has been baptized Cleopatra's Tooth, and thus I shall record it here, though it is often also appellated Mother Teteron's Tooth, due to a legend which has it "that when Mother Teteron went fishing, the good little lady lost

her tooth and when she went to look for it, what did she find but a solid rock!" How Cleopatra ever entered into the case has never been satisfactorily explained.

Having now literally negotiated Trinidad's none too translucent Hudson, which courses in all its splendor past lofty mountains, with numberless island dreamlands lying awash at their feet, we turn east. Now we actually begin to hug the island's shore most intimately, and slowly Fort George slips to the lee. This fort, in common with Curaçao's Fort Nassau, maintains an efficient naval signal station from a most exalted vantage. Then we get our first glimpse of Port-of-Spain, and at once our state of dreamy idleness is metamorphosed into one of hustle and bustle, for we may be anchoring soon.

I had come to Port-of-Spain to stay for a while. The majority of passengers, once they were landed on the jetty, would scatter in all directions and scamper and scurry like ants for an hour or two or three, only to return, hugging loads of curios they never look at once they get home, and proudly displaying a tiny bottle of Angostura bitters, dispensed free by the plant which for years has made this essential adjunct to a gin and bitters. Then, dead tired, and having seen little or nothing at all, but having imbibed more rum punches than is good for them, and that few are actually able to carry with grace, these "hit and rum" varieties of tourists would recount at great length, between the hiccups, their tales of pleasure and woe. And finally, they and their drinks would be whisked back on the launch to the ship, there to be taken in tow and lugged, hauled, half-pushed and half-dragged up the Jacob's ladder.

With this brief outpouring about one phase of tourist travel off my mind, and feeling much better therefor, I would now turn back the pages of history and geography, because it often behooves those who write travel narratives not only to refer to their own storehouses of personal experiences and observations but to underpin these by digging well into the substructure of history, geography and exploration. Without these three, in my humble opinion, a travel narrative, no matter how personal and informal and delightful, would never be complete. In the same way, such imposing popular works as the *History of Wells*, van Loon's

Geography or Durante's Philosophy, all more or less condensed but easily digestible anthologies, stand firmly on a foundation built by the sagacious use of ancient and priceless volumes of reference.

By way of emphasis and elucidation, let me jot down just a few of the many travel and discovery Odysseys, whose importance and existence shall continue to live on, and to which many of us have occasion to refer. We may even have to begin with the books of Confucius, Moses and those sacred arcanas, the Vedas and Zend-Avestas, and the Talmud, the Mishna and Gamara and Masorah, or the Zenda and Dhamapada, Lao-tse or Taoistic sacred writings and all those philosophies or prophecies that stand unique, since these, originally propounding religions or philosophies, are also founts of geographic knowledge. They antedate the book of books, our universal pillar, the Bible, by oodles of ages. I have special reference to the Sabaeen inscription in the Book of Kings, ninth century B.C., and of the Sabaeans who lived in northern Arabia, in addition to the writings of Polybius, Strabo, geographers, soldiers and merchants who may have inspired our friend, Claudius Ptolemy, 127 A.D. to 155 A.D., the Greek astronomer, mathematician and geographer's immortal, in his celebrated treatise, "Magale Syntaxis" which, while affecting so much medieval thought, actually was the foundation for the knowledge of trigonometry. In this treatise he set forth the system of our universe and rejected the theory of the rotation of our earth about its axis. On this, the great mariner and his contemporaries based their theories. Ptolemy's second treatise, no less important to geographers, was his "Geographike Syntaxis" which is of particular interest and value for the twenty-seven maps it contains. This was the standard work on geography consulted throughout the Middle Ages. As a corroboration of what I have said in preceding paragraphs, wherein I implied that historians and anatomists of subjects of philosophy and geography have had to dig down very deeply into previously written perdurant works, that master geographer Ptolemy quite frankly states in his preface that his story of geography was based directly on a work of his contemporary, Marinus of Tyre, whose maps became known only through those of Ptolemy.

Julius Caesar also left us a valuable geographic narrative in his "De Bello Gallico," a record of his reconnoiterings in Britain.

Then came the rise of Mahomet, whose philosophies and travels gave a stupendous stimulus to history and geography, and the Vikings, during the eighth to tenth century, who added their little bit to the records of exploration of Europe, the Northlands, and the earlier American scene.

Skipping a few more centuries of these darker ages, we come to that marvel of immortal discoverers of the thirteenth century, Ser Marco Polo, of whose "The Most Noble and Famous Travels of Marco Polo" Ramisis said in his own work, "There never was a man, be he Christian, or Saracen, or Tartar, or Heathen, who ever traveled over so much of the world as did that noble and illustrious citizen, of the City of Venice, Messer Marco, the Son of Messer Nicolo Polo. Thanks be to God. Amen. . . . Amen. . . ."

Lest I forget, I should refer to the works of the Arabian geographers, including Yakut (thirteenth century), with his famous Dictionary of Countries, as well as the Encyclopedia of Masudi ("Les Prairies d'Or"), who traveled all over the known world. Then *summa summarum*, there is the Arabian Nights, the world's best story book, with the seven voyages of Sinbad, etc., and the works of Ibn Battuta (1325), whom I believe was the Moslems' greatest explorer and who, in his thirty years of travel, covered a much wider range than Messer Marco Polo and was the first to explore Arabia.

Slowly ambulating through one or more centuries we stumble upon our Genoese mariner, Christopher Columbus, whom every youngster knows by name and deed, and whose letters and Codex of Privileges are no less important to historians and geographers. We have, for instance, Columbus' famous letter which he addressed in 1493 to Lord Raphael Sanxis, treasurer of Ferdinand, King of Spain, to which letter our own age owes so much for the information it contained concerning the islands Columbus discovered. Further we have his "Own Book of Patents, Privileges and Concessions" granted him by the King of Spain in 1493.

Without detracting in any way from the accomplishments of Columbus, the descriptions of the Cabots, John and Sebastian, the first men in the employ of the English to reach the shores of North America, never chronicled in report or book, were actually incorporated in the form of a map, drawn in 1497 by Sebastian, upon

which he attested in brief to the fact that John and Sebastian discovered America and further that they had called the land *Terra Primum Visa* (Land First Seen). This enabled Juan de la Cosa, one of Columbus' trustees, to pattern his own famous map, made in 1500, after the description left by Cabot. I should interpolate here, to substantiate what I have said in the first chapters of this book, and sharing therein the views advanced by the Smithsonian Institute, that it is not at all unlikely that there were voyagers to America, either from the Iceland and Greenland regions or from Caucasia and Mongolia, preceding Columbus, Cabot or the Zeno brothers, or even Leif Ericsson and the Vikings, and probably long before Isidoro of Sevilla, a famous and learned geographer living in the seventh century, propounded his views and theories.

Eskimo voyagers, or rather their ancestors, upon their migration from the Asian mainland, traversed the North American continent, the Smithsonian believes, via Alaska, Arctic Canada, and in their peregrinations even visited Greenland and possibly further, where they must have met the earlier inhabitants. These treks then must have worked both ways, so that the peoples of Greenland and other regions, to satisfy their curiosity, came to the North American regions. Finds of implements in Greenland may substantiate this theory, a view that was already expressed by Sir Percy Sykes in his "History of Exploration," published in 1936.

After this short interruption, back to the momentous years of West Indian discovery and ruthless colonizing. In this connection, although they did not have much to do with West Indian exploration, I think we should not overlook Bartholomew Diaz, who circumnavigated Africa in 1486; Vasco da Gama, who made his first voyage to India in 1497; Magellan, who sailed around the world in 1505, and Vasco Núñez de Balboa, 1513, who crossed the Isthmus of Panama. More pertinent, perhaps, is the great work left by the Dominican Friar, Apostle of the Indies, and Bishop of Chiapa, Bartholomé de las Casas, whose History of the Indies, written about the year 1502, renders a remarkable account of Hispaniola of his time. It was de las Casas who quite innocently was responsible for the slave scourge, but who also was big enough to dare to upbraid a king for his neglect of Spanish and Indian affairs in this region.

The greater explorers of the seventeenth century were the French, whose standard bearers, Jacques Cartier and Sieur de la Salle, reached Niagara Falls, and have become almost a byword with us, even though the majority may think of La Salle in terms of motorcars. La Salle's discoveries, of course, occurred when this blessed land was still the dark continent of the ages. Besides La Salle and Cartier, there were Maisonneuve, the discoverer of Montreal; Samuel de Champlain, who founded Quebec in 1608 and Joliet and Marquette, who explored the regions of the Mississippi in 1672.

But, ten years before the Spanish Armada showed itself in all its awe-inspiring force in the English Channel, the Dutch voyager, Jan Corneliszoon Huygen van Linschoten, had published (1578) his "Discours Voyages into Ye Easte and West Indies, divided into Four Bookes and Printed at London."

This happened in the identical decade that Richard Hakluyt's famous and unexcelled volumes made their debut on the geographical horizon (1582). These volumes have been almost as a Bible to me. I refer now to his "Divers Voyages touching the Discovery of America and the islands adjacent to the same." This was followed up by the monumental work dedicated to English navigation and maritime adventurers of that period, "The Principal Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation" (1589). If I may be permitted to say it, Hakluyt's works stand out more conspicuously for his descriptions of the exploits of such navigators and adventurers as Hawkins, Frobisher, Drake, Gilbert, Raleigh and Cavendish, and many more, who laid the foundation, or rather were the sponsors of, that naval supremacy, on which the subsequent pattern and fabric of the great British Empire has been woven.

How could Americans ever forget Henry Hudson, of 1609, and Captain John Smith who in 1614 examined the shores between Cape Cod and Penobscot Bay? I notice I have overlooked that famous Jesuit, Samuel Fritz, whose travels took him to the upper reaches of the Amazon, and who left a book and map in 1691. Then, touching some more upon the early American and Canadian scenes, I suppose I really should add those greatest explorers of northern lands, our friends Alexander Mackenzie, who in 1789-

1801 set out to discover the northern route to Arctic or Pacific islands and, I believe, was the first to cross America at its greatest width, and one Captain George Vancouver, after whom Vancouver is appropriately named. In addition there are Simon Fraser, who explored in 1805 the headwaters of the Fraser River (think of that when you eat your Fraser River canned salmon) and David Thompson, who in 1790 had no little to do with the reconnoitering of Saskatchewan.

This brings me to a reconnoitering of the latest American phase, that embraces the discoverers and geographers of the last hundred and thirty years, such as that great man, Mungo Park, who traveled in 1799 in Interior Africa, and David Livingstone, undoubtedly the greatest of them all, whose explorations occurred around 1841, and who probably revolutionized the map of Africa, together with those other contemporary African explorers, Burton, Speke, Baker and Stanley, Joseph Thompson, who found a direct route from Mombassa in 1897, and C. M. Doughty, whose wanderings in Arabia resulted in his "Arabia Deserta" of 1875. Looking eastward, we find that greatest of Central Asian discoverers and geographers, Prjevalsky, who published a "Journey and Discovery of Central Asia," and Sir Aurel Stein, who undoubtedly played a leading part in the present century, and who crossed the Himalayas and earned the title of possibly the greatest explorer of Central Asia.

When I add to this none too brimful list the illustrious names of contemporary voyagers and discoverers such as Sven Hedin, Pelliot and Koslov, I believe I have but skimmed the surface of this thesaurus of discovery and exploration. There are still such famous Arctic explorers and geographers as Sir John Barrow, Davis, Baffin, John Ross and Parry, Franklin, Collinson, Willoughby and Chancellor, Burrough, Barents, Nordenskjöld, Stefansson and Bartlett, Greeley, Fridtjof, Nansen, Cook, Peary, and my great hero, Amundsen, which brings me at long last to such great names as Bertram Thomas, who in 1932 crossed the famous Rub' al Khali from south to north, which, incidentally, was crossed from east to west in part by Philby.

For lack of space we can add no more names to this list, but these may serve as the pillars that constitute the framework on which the old and new structure of the story of geography,

history, navigation and exploration has been constructed. The records and maps of these men not only embrace much vital material for the scholar but also provide episodes to which students and readers cannot help but recur again and again, and which stir up emotions akin to those which the ancients may be supposed to have felt as they listened to the exploits of Marco Polo.

But let us revert once more, without further digressions, to Trinidad's interesting history. It was on Trinity Sunday, the last day of July, 1488, that, after weeks of sailing, hardship, endless waiting and mutinous panic, the Almirante discovered this beautiful isle on his third voyage. He anchored his caravels off the Point of Arenal, but Columbus himself was not actually the first European to set foot there, nor at Icacos, since it fell to one Alonzo Pérez, one of Columbus' sailormen, to be the first one to bend his knees and thank the Lord for the blessed landfall. Dimly, on the port quarter, the summits of three mountains loomed up. To them these looked like one island, which, it is thought, may not only have been linked to legendary Atlantis at one time, but also, according to geologists, have been physically united with the mainland of Venezuela. The three mountains, or Three Sisters, as they are called, that Columbus beheld, lying eastward of Guyaguayare Bay, near Punta las Tablas, in the southeast of the island, were united at the base, forming a sort of three-in-one. It was a strange coincidence, with Columbus having made a vow to call the first land he sighted Holy Trinity, that the event should actually fall on Trinity Sunday, and moreover that he would sight these strangely configured mountains. Hence, with a solemn feeling of devotion, and mindful of his vow, he named the island La Trinidado and claimed it for the King and Queen of Spain.

However, he did not stop here, for the very good reason that he felt there was nothing worth stopping for at the time. It was thirty years or more before any real attempt at conquest was made, with the advent of the Royal Treasurer of Porto Rico, Don Antonio Sedenó, a very worthy sort of fellow. Still, there had been snoopers around before. First, in 1499, came Alonzo de Ojeda, together with the unwitting name-giver of America (for what reason I yet do not know, since he never touched these shores), Amerigo Vespucci, as well as our old friend and mapmaker, Juan de la Cosa,

both companions of the Almirante, and dissenters at that. Then, following close in their footsteps, came Pedro Alonzo Nine and, in the same year, apparently having smelled a choice rat, bobbed up Vicente Yáñez Pinzón, who had also been a companion of Columbus, and who was equally desirous to go Columbus one better. It was rumored in intimate circles, in connection with Alonzo de Ojeda's second visit, that he was not so much attracted to Trinidad by its beauty as by the pearls that were fished off the Island Margharita.

Trinidad, whose original name must have been Yere, or Cairi, "land of the humming bird," as related by *le bon amiral*, Sir Walter Raleigh a hundred years later, was at the time of its discovery, when the Spaniards were engaged upon the highly diverting pastime of blackbirding in the Gulf, densely populated by Caribs, who would not have been so war-like and ferocious if the whites had but left them peacefully alone.

A period of ruthless conquest and catching of slaves for the mines in Hispaniola ensued. Records of these happenings have been graphically goose-quilled for posterity by the Dominican Friar, Bartholomé de las Casas. Writing only forty years after the island's discovery, he deplored that "expeditions to Trinidad for the purpose of obtaining Indians by force or by fraud, in order to sell them into slavery at Porto Rico and Santo Domingo [which was then Haiti and Santo Domingo combined], were common at that period."

The year 1510 was a scarlet one in Trinidad's annals, when martyrs of the Roman Catholic faith not only paid heavy toll for their unselfish zeal, but two Fathers paid the piper for the blackbirding sins of their secular Spanish contemporaries. They lost their heads to the Caribs. It was another twenty-five years before Trinidad was officially occupied, fortified and settled by the Dons.

The first official note of the British in this panorama of conquest came with the clarion call of gold, when Eldorado was the magnet. The one obsession of those who flocked to the New World at once became the thirst for precious stones and metals, and many efforts were directed towards the discovery of legendary Eldorado and mystic Lake Parima, supposed to lie somewhere in British Guiana. These frenzied, gold-crazed treasure seekers, from Dan to Beer-

sheba, found their parallel in our own gold rushes to the Yukon and California, whose peregrinations had much to do with the discovery and reconnoitering of that inexhaustibly rich country.

In this connection, there appeared upon the Trinidadian scene, on February 1, 1595, to be exact, the Hon. Robert Duddely, styled Duke of Northumberland and Earl of Leicester, a son of the unfortunate Earl of Leicester of Elizabeth's time. This young chap arrived in a vessel called the "Bear" and was the first voyager that we know of who traversed the breadth and length of the island of Trinidad.

In connection with this young earl, the *Trinidadian*, a magazine published at Port-of-Spain, printed a rather interesting and short biography of him, by a Captain Daniel, and from which I borrow: ". . . this complete gentleman in all suitable employments, this Master Dudley, who, so we have been told, was an exact seaman, a good navigator, an excellent architect, mathematician, physician and proud possessor of a number of other accomplishments. Handsome, personable, tall of stature, red-haired and of admirable comport, he was above all noted for riding a horse, for tilting and teaching a dog to sit in order to catch partridges and maybe he took after his father and was a good lover to boot."

The aforementioned father was Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, upon whom evil tongues once said, her most gracious majesty, Queen Bess, looked with more than ordinary favor, and whom she knighted Earl of Leicester as a prologue to giving him her royal hand. However, with true Tudor caution, clever Bess did not follow through, but conveniently proposed another very desirable match (desirable, at least, to her) between the Earl and her cousin, the Queen of Scots. This little business did not come off as she had planned it. Handsome Dudley, thoughtless of the old lady, his Queen (who was as homely as a Borneo *nasalis larvatis*), had meanwhile married an inamorata of very long standing. It was whispered in high court circles that this unfortunate lady, the widow of the first Earl of Essex, subsequently died mysteriously, and much before her time. While not casting any aspersions upon the handsome Lothario, nor even suggesting he may have mixed the wrong potion in one of his absent-minded moments, while the lady was napping, it must be pointed out, nevertheless, that he was

out of favor for a while. But not for long. Queen Bess liked his mustache too much, and he was given command of the land forces of the Spanish Armada time, so as to be always near.

Papa Dudley was a jolly old potato (if I may borrow the lingo of former Governor Alfred Smith), a true patron of the Arts, and the founder of that Leicester House institution, the Areopagus, a literary sewing circle where, at functions conforming in a manner to our present publishers' and authors' teas, foregathered Sidney, Spencer and other intelligentsia and enlightened bright-lights of that Elizabethan progressive age. Dudley was also a warm-blooded soul and, not content to call it a day and leave loving to the younger set, this gallant aged *cupido amoretto*, this *cavalière servante*, became involved again in a liaison with the Dowager-Countess of Sheffield, from which union sprang our Master Dudley. So it came to pass that on the wintry morn of November 6, 1594, this young sprig sailed from Southampton with the "Bear," the "Bear's Whelp" and two pinnaces besides, for the New World. Thrilled with the accomplishments of Drake and Cavendish, he had always cherished the hope that some day he also would set out for the regions of the Southern seas, but he chose the West Indies and the New World instead, and therefore landed at Trinidad.

He anchored somewhere on the southern coast, the "Baie Pelican" as he described it (I suppose because of the hordes of fish-diving pelicans that abound there even to this day). On a Sunday morning, when he had hardly finished his porridge and Irish bacon and eggs, up came two canoes chock-full of Indians, peaceful ones this time. Bearing quantities of tobacco, that was said to be of choice flavor, they boarded the English ships. At once a nice bit of barter ensued, in which fishhooks, hatchets and glass hooks, called beadles, figured much, although Dudley did all the figuring, and as a result of which, as has been customary in the trade with unsuspecting, gullible Indians, the Indians were hoodwinked in grandiose fashion.

Amazed at the fact that the Indians spoke Spanish, Master Dudley, with all the sweetness of artificial honey on his manly lips, questioned them as to possible gold mines. The Indians, the great-

est known "yes-men" of all times, affirmed they knew one and, for a consideration, offered to lead the Englishmen to it.

A small party subsequently set out to do some reconnoitering and returned laden with a rock ore that looked like gold. This became the incentive for a larger expedition. Having arrived at the bonanza, they proceeded to dig with feverish haste, lest they attract any other gold-bent stragglers, and began to fill every available receptacle with ore. The race for the magic Trinidadian gold was on. But the highly engaging work was rudely interrupted, as Dudley reported, "by a certain flie which in the night appeareth like unto fire" (presumably the fireflies and phosphorescent beetles that abound there in all their innocent glory to this very day). Still, gold, so Dudley thought, had actually been found, and it stunned him as it has stunned others since, and the excitement of it filled him with an intense emotion. He had become infected, as millions in later years would become, with this lust for Golconda that would mean, or so they erroneously thought, the fleshpots of Egypt for them forevermore.

It was in one of these flatulent or exuberant moments that Dudley resolved to lay claim to the "Myne Golde," in the Queen's name, and caused a plate of lead to be prepared, on which he inscribed the Royal Arms and the following words: "Robertus, Duddeleius, Anglus Filius, Illustrissimi, Comitis, Leicesterensis, 3^e, Die, Februarii, Anno Domini 1595, Cum, Suis, Copiis, In, Hanc, Insulam, Descendit, Eamque, Caepit, Ad, Usum, Serenissimae, Principis, Franciae, Er, Hiberniae, Fidei, Defensoris, Etc. Atque, Hunc, Locum, Divinae, Mariae, Promontorium Appelari, Iussit, Sibi, Omnia, Iura, Regalia, Vendicans, Dum, In, Hoc, Negotio, Aliquid, A, Regina, Sibi, In, Mandat, Habetit."

This, translated for those whose Latin may not be entirely up to snuff, and, incidentally, neither is mine, reads: "Robert Dudley, Englishman, son of the most illustrious Earl of Leicester, landed in this island with his forces on the third day of February, 1595, [old style] and took it for the use of the Most Serene Prince Elizabeth, Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., and ordered this place to be called the Promontory of the Divine Mary, claiming for himself all Royal rights while

during this enterprise he shall hold any authority from the Queen for himself."

Hence this plaque was affixed to a tree in proximity to the mine, and trumpets were sounded and drums were beat, and the whole troop shouted, "God save our Queen Elizabeth."

But fate has a way of displaying its irony in an ofttime curious manner. This affair had a strange epilogue. Presently the Spanish governor, Don Antonio de Barrio, got wind of the happenings and rushed thither posthaste to see what the tumult and shouting was about, and what he could do in the way of securing a slice, or, rather, of getting his own pockets larded with rocks. After an altercation with him, Master Dudley caused a second plate to be affixed, supplementing the first one, and then lingered in Trinidad some more in the hope of meeting Sir Walter Raleigh. The latter, so he had learned, was snooping around, since he was Guiana-bound upon his Eldorado expedition. But Sir Walter, for some very good reason, did not show his face, and Dudley, at the end of his patience, and having secured enough gold-filled rocks, sailed away on March eleventh, through the Bocas, in quest of further adventure.

Eleven days later, in March of the same year, hard upon Dudley's heels, Sir Walter, the *célèbre Amiral Anglais*, by which name he was also known, put in an appearance. He was too late to meet Master Dudley, which was just as well, because he had found that the "gold" was nothing but an iron pyrite, a marcasite, to be exact. This revelation Master Dudley, when informed of it, took very philosophically, remarking that "all is not gilde that glistereth"—which also endeth our illuminating Dudley historye. . . .

Sir Walter signaled his appearance by doing a bit of carving among the Dons and the Corps de Garde; and he burned the ancient Spanish capital and took Señor Barrio, the governor, a prisoner. It was during this momentous undertaking that Sir Walter, while touching at la Brea, calked his vessels with pitch from the Lake and made a prophecy that has since, to some extent, become true. He said that there would be enough pitch there to calk or supply all the world.

He must have had a very entertaining time, gastronomically speaking, for he gives an excellent and truthful account of the

delicious mangrove oysters, which are to be had in Trinidad unto this day. But, as he wrote in his memoirs, he preferred to confine himself to the essentials of a good English fare (I presume at that time the English were not yet known as the worst cooks in the world). It is Sir Walter who is responsible for the saying: "The difference between a rich man and a poor man is this—the former eats when he pleases and the latter when he can get it."

In those days nobody had any notion of cookbooks, or had to listen to noisome, lengthy tirades about vitamins A, B and C and so on; and no one cared much whether a waistline was twenty-five inches or thirty and one-quarter, or whether an embonpoint embraced two hundred or three hundred pounds avoirdupois. All that the thick-headed and thick-waisted Britons of those days cared about was how many legs of mutton they could gobble up and how many mugs of musty ale they could tipple. The devil was left to take care of their constitution and the rest.

They considered that there was no sorrier sight this side of the grave than a man lean as a rake. A man that could gormandize almost to exhaustion, and bibber even more, and belch quite melodiously (?) was considered a man thoroughly at peace with the world. How people mawed in these days we have even seen on the screen, when we beheld fat-cheeked, beefy Henry the Eighth crush with his pudgy hands a couple of chickens and devour them in less time than it would take others to eat an egg. The hardy Britons of those days had stomachs of an ostrich. Anyone gobbling for breakfast less than half a dozen sets of bacon and eggs, with a rasher of six kidneys and a pheasant or two thrown in for good measure, would be considered as taking the exuberance out of eating. They were gluttons for punishment but also gluttons for belly-timber, and they loved a banquet that was packed as full as a rush-hour subway train.

But now back to Sir Walter who came upon the Trinidadian scene once more in 1617; he saw much and left an interesting and well-written record for posterity. He explored the coasts and waters before the mouth of the Orinoco, the Gulf of Paria, the Island of Trinidad, different river branches of the Orinoco delta and the river itself as far up as the Caroni, and then wrote a substantial report on his voyage, addressed to Lord Charles Howard

and Sir Robert Cecyll. He also made during and after these voyages different maps, of Trinidad especially, of which he said: "Of other ports and rivers I leave to speak here and means to describe them as they are situate in the particular pit and description of the yland, which, as it is rudely done, my purpose is to send your Lordship after a few days." And when Sir Walter gave an account of the expedition against Antonio de Barrio (the chap he incarcerated) he said: "How all these rivers crosse and encounter, how the country lies and is bordered the passage of Barrio, mine owne discovery, and the way that I entered with all the rest of the nations and rivers, you lordships shall receive in a large chart or map, which I have not yet finished and which I shall most humbly pray your lordships to secrete, and not to suffer to passe your owne hands; for by a draught thereof all may be prevented by other nations."

No history of conquest could ever be complete without mention of the punctilious Dutch who, always knowing a hawk from a handsaw, yet for once made a miscalculation when in 1640 they poked their noses for a short and unsuccessful spell into Trinidad. They were on their way from Essequibo, where they should have stayed, for the very logical explanation given by them in so few words: "found no booty." What is worse, they received a trouncing from the Spaniard and the Cacique (Carib) that left them almost without their breeches and they therefore beat it back so fast, although ordinarily very slow in their movements, that they could not be seen for dust. They vowed they would never return and they have kept to their promise.

In 1672 Sir Tobias Bridges tried to go the Dutchmen one better, but he failed hopelessly too. However, the French, under Marquis de Maintenon, who was assisted by some close friends (a handful of pirates from distant Tortuga), made a very successful landing and acquired much plunder besides. The Marquis carried away a hundred thousand pieces of eight, even though he had to retreat in hasty disorder. It had come time for the Carib Indians to do a little cutting up, which they did in 1687, when they revolted. They had been good pupils and even embroidered on what they had learned from their more civilized white contemporaries, so that

the governor and almost all the whites were put to the stake and copiously devoured.

Lavassor de la Touche, a Frenchman, in 1690 made another unsuccessful attempt at plunder, preceding by almost twenty-six years the well-known Teach, the Blackbeard, pirate and buccaneer, who had the reputation of creating quite an impression wherever he managed to drop his calling card. Teach was a good psychologist and was wont to sail very near the wind and to spread



so much consternation among the peaceful inhabitants that they were knocked almost dead with fear long before his actual fireworks would start. He pillaged and ravaged the town of Port-of-Spain, securing tremendous booty and treasure, and then, as if nothing had happened, and as innocently as a lamb, he calmly put out to sea.

Out of the phantasm of all this ado came a period of prosperity and advancement, although in 1727 the cocoa industry, with which the island has since been identified, was destroyed by blight. Thanks, however, to Aragonese priests, a much hardier cocoa variety, the *Theobroma Forastero* (almost identical to the Java cocoa variety), was introduced some thirty years later and the industry once more was revived.

The period of prosperity on the island had its ups and its downs until the advent of one Philip Roume de Saint-Laurent, a planter from neighboring French islands. He, perhaps the real founder of the island, was impressed with Trinidad's fertility and in 1783

bought a large tract of land, drew up a bill of rights and had it approved by Don José Maria Chacon, the last but very excellent governor of Spain. This is truly a compliment since one must admit that the Dons, whether right or not, have come in for a lot of punishment or well-earned abuse in these pages.

Chacon's deed was the signal for an influx of British settlers, who came in droves, augmented by the French, from neighboring islands. The immigration of the French had been given added impetus by Haiti's rebellion under Toussaint l'Ouverture, in 1793. Then came the war between Britain and Spain that culminated in a British punitive expedition, under Sir Ralph Abercromby, who has figured earlier in these pages, and resulted in the capture of Trinidad. Chacon surrendered without a shot having been fired, which was just as well, but he also burned his ships, which was not so good. Trinidad's permanent annexation to Britain was accomplished by the well-known Treaty of Amiens in 1802—although the Articles of Capitulation were signed in 1797.

Sir Ralph, for some reason or other, did not stay very long at Trinidad, but he left Colonel Thomas Picton, together with his second in command, to take over the reins. Picton, whip in hand, began to restore peace and order and stalked grimly into the altogether too easy-going administrative offices of Port-of-Spain, whose lackadaisical and knavish *mala fides* could be compared with those of the Walkerian epoch in New York City.

The result of this fortuitous happening was that a period of social and economic transition set in, in contrast to the turmoil that was left behind. Sir Thomas did quite well, so we have learned. To begin with, in front of the Government House stood a gallows as a permanent warning to grafters. Picton was given to the belief that it was little less than murder and certainly more than sacrilege for politicians and grafters to wax rich at the expense of the hard-driven and less favored multitudes. He believed in the theory that every person in this world should be working for what he obtained. He did not believe in what we have often come to refer to as "the idle rich." He considered grafting politicians the curse of the nation and treated them accordingly.

But let's see what else this fellow Picton did to put the fear of God into those that strayed from the righteous path, a habit which

created for him a great crop of enemies, as can be expected. It was a pity that his reward was not to come until long after his glorious death at Waterloo, where he had gone after having served the Duke of Wellington all through the Peninsular War. His enemies did not leave a stone unturned while he was in office to drag him through the mud, and he was impeached for malfeasance in office under heavy clouds of suspicion. After having writhed in the toils of accusation, he was later acquitted when it was proven that his enemies had conspired in one of the gravest crimes known. Picton, almost heartbroken, left the island, never to return. As can be expected in such matters, it was left for posterity to exhume him from the tomb of mud which had engulfed him, and they began to name places, roads and Lord knows what else after him, and sickening were the eulogies bestowed on him after his death. For the sake of clarity, let us understand, however, that such happenings of belated gratitude are not confined to Trinidad alone. Bold and courageous men, endowed with unshakable moral sense, will always be faced with such trials.

Picton's methods went very far toward lifting Trinidad above the level of mediocrity. Roads, for instance, that are today the glory of the island, were built at the time of Picton. Road contractors, among others, trembled before his grim and unheralded visits. Order and prosperity, notwithstanding the sternness of this iron taskmaster's methods, returned and the population of the island increased by leaps and bounds. In a book recording this great Trinidadian's achievements, the following lines especially attracted my attention, since they give an interesting graphic picture of the man and his methods: "His almost gigantic frame seemed to defy methods. He displayed an energy of body and mind that surprised even the friends of good order and awed those who wished to disturb the public tranquillity. He trusted nothing to secretaries, superintendents and contractors, pests generally of a rising colony. He inspected every department of government with his own eyes. He was generally on horseback from eight to ten hours a day and moved so rapidly as to seem gifted with the powers of ubiquity. Was there a disturbance somewhere, Picton was sure to be on the spot before either the police or the authorities could arrive, remonstrating with the heads of the rioters with

a thick "souplejack" which he generally carried and used with no light hand. Was a road to be made, Picton always planned it and what is more saw to it that it was finished."

Reading of this man's methods or, more to the point, his accomplishments, reminded me of our own railroad builder, Hill, or that Swiss-American Californian, Sutter.

Let me interpolate here that Picton read and wrote his own despatches. His phrases most often carried a sting but they seldom failed to hit the mark. There is a story that describes the man even more.

When Picton heard of anyone inclined to stir up strife he would send for him. Taking him to the gallery of Government House, from where could be seen the gallows in all its ghastly reality, Picton would remark that he had heard thus and so, but hoped it was a lie. "And now, go," Picton would say, "reform your ways, but if you do not," pointing to the gallows, "either leave the island or behave in accordance with your oath of allegiance, else the wind shall pass between the soles of your feet and yonder grass."

It is a pity that he did not have the pleasure of drinking the *vin d'honneur* during his life, although he seemed to have fared better, in the end, than that countryman of mine, Rembrandt van Ryn, the greatest painter of all times, whose spirit even to this day walks in the shadows of dishonor. The story is really too well known to repeat again and yet I cannot resist putting it down because it reveals to what lengths ingratitude can be stretched. Rembrandt's masterpieces are known the world over; they fetch almost unbelievable prices. His famous painting, "The Night Watch," which graces the Ryks Museum at Amsterdam and has become a Mecca or a magnet luring thousands of travelers from near and far to gaze upon its beauty, could not be bought for any amount of money. And yet, while he painted this and his many other great masterpieces, he was forced into bankruptcy, and died a pauper, mired in undischarged debt, due to the rank ingratitude of his countrymen and the stupid inconsistencies and stubborn adherence to the interpretation of Dutch Corpus Juris. His countrymen, who are so outstanding in other respects, and those that govern, have never felt any moral qualms nor considered it worth

while to make the *amende honorable* and cleanse his great name of the stain that it carries. Rembrandt and his immortal works are among the greatest drawing-cards that Holland possesses. I do not know at the moment what amount was involved in his debt to the Amsterdam nabobs, but it is my humble opinion that a balance could have been struck long ago, in consideration of what the goodwill of the great name Rembrandt has connoted to The Netherlands.

But let us digress no further, but return to Trinidad to see what else there remains to report of its history. Since Columbus' day many seafaring men have entered the Gulf of Paria, and this historical narrative would be rather one-sided were it to fail to record the visit of lean, one-armed, one-eyed Nelson, who passed through the Boca de Navios on June seventh, 1805, in the frigate "Victory." His was one of a fleet of thirteen sails that had just completed a game of hide-and-seek with the French and the Spaniard, all the way from Gibraltar to the Caribbean. But alas, the Delta of the Orinoco was not to become as famous as the Delta of the Nile. The enemy retreated like flying fish before a hunting shark. And what was worse, the inhabitants of Port-of-Spain mistook Nelson's fleet for that of the French or the Don and quickly armed themselves to the teeth. Disappointed and upset, the Hero of Aboukir left and, while giving chase to the allied fleet, once more put in at Martinique and thence hastened back to Europe, where the last of the great English seafaring strategists, Mahatmas and conquerors met *his* Waterloo at Trafalgar.

With this, Trinidad's historiographical summary is practically closed.

Port-of-Spain, or Puerto-de-España as it has been called, reclines barely above sea level, in the hollow of the northwest promontory, on a verdured plain and amidst lofty forest-clad hills and uplands well hidden by clots of palm-trees. A busy place of decided commercial importance, it lies astride a direct steamer route from Europe to the West Indies and points beyond, boasts at least sixty thousand souls of every color, creed and nationality, and is, although difficult to believe upon first acquaintance, the second city in order of size in all the West Indies.

Once you have cleared the wharves it reveals itself as possibly half modern and half more or less run to seed, much of its hoariness dating from the year 1808. In my humble opinion it is one of the cleanest, most sanitary, excellently paved and dustproof cities, for which pleasantness the adjacent Pitch Lake at la Brea must take logical credit. In addition, it is also the most mosquito-proof city in the West Indies and possibly in all the Spanish Main.

Apart from the attractiveness of Port-of-Spain's garden-like beauty which, as always in these tropical places has to be looked for outside the city's confines, this city hides among its thoroughfares many interesting things worth noting. Its main attraction actually begins with the Queen's Park and Savannah—a six-hundred acre expanse of recreation ground—easily reached by surface car from Frederick Street, which latter is the Fifth Avenue, the Regent Street or Rue de la Paix of this cosmopolitan city. Many of its shops are indeed large, and several compare very favorably with the larger department stores in some of our large cities.

You may think that Port-of-Spain has very little to offer in scenic or architectural delights, and in this thought you would not be very far wrong. What attracts one, for instance, in the French West Indies, or in the toy-like Holland islands, is found to be sorely wanting here, for Marine Square, the Customs House, and the Harbor Master's Office with its gerontic bastions—all near the waterfront—the churches, including the Cathedral, and even the many larger Government and City buildings have indeed very little to offer.

Yet for days I have traipsed and stalked and explored the bustling place from all points of the compass, jostling and rubbing elbows with that curious melting pot of people from East and West whose many types may tax not only the casual observer but doubtless will intrigue the ethnologist and sociologist as well. I rediscovered its rusty, Spanish-looking warehouses, whose venerable stones tell of bygone romantic days, and I rode up and down the narrow shopping-district streets in its tiny trolley cars and musical-named omnibuses, to the extensive green Savannah, the pearl of Port-of-Spain. I cashed my always-convenient American Express Cheques (that was in the happy days when I still had checks to cash—*sic transit gloria mundum!*) at Port-of-Spain's

excellent banking institutions located in the very heart of the city, bought our fruit, and arranged our steamer and Boca launch tickets along the wharf and on wide Marine Square, where are to be found the most unusual trading and haggling hucksters of the port. I admired its schools and colleges, renowned throughout the Indies, and shuffled along Frederick Street and Queens Park East and Queens Park West, in a veritable slipper parade. Then, having seen all this, together with friend wife and friend guide I set forth to find the Botanical Garden, the real magnet of the isle. We started from the delightfully situated Hotel Sand, not far from the Garden, at the end of the St. Ann's trolley line. This famous landmark is set, like a beautiful centerpiece on a well-garnished dinner table, against a background that is florescent and munificently blessed by Mother Nature with purple and red bougainvillaeas, hibiscus, alamanda, plumbago, and numberless scarlet poinsettias, or flamboyants. But it was not until we had gone even farther outside the city limits that we began to drink in a Trinidadian loveliness that beggars all description. The hills were clothed in tropical verdure; the vegetation of the high woods was indescribably luxuriant; the broad stretching plains, covered with feathery tassels of the cane brake, the rich vegas with its scarlet immortelle and the cool groves of yellow or brownish-red, broad-leaved cocoa arched away on either side on the road to Diego Martin and the idyllic Blue Basin.

Withal, apart from this forceful attractiveness that is Trinidad from beginning to end, in every recess of Port-of-Spain's human beehive there lurk vestiges of East and West to intrigue one in the native life here. True to the maxim that "the proper study of mankind is man," there seemed to be no place where mankind could be better studied than Port of Spain. For the town is literally packed with exotic and oriental peoples who, despite the inroads of our Western "Machine Age" and its superficial civilization, have retained against all odds their mysterious, natural, unhindered state. To begin with, reminiscent of what Mark Twain once said that there were two kinds of women, the "colored ones and the plain," I also could say that there are only two races of our great mankind. As for the white residents, many of whom are imported, they are either of sturdy British or Portuguese stock, the latter often

composed of some of the finest types of the Portuguese race who are sociable and courteous to the 7th degree. Besides these there is also a mixed element of whites, originally of Spanish and French descent, while the remainder makes up that remarkable hodgepodge of nationalities that is truly astounding, since these have been generously compounded from those of Africa and Europe, the East and the West. In addition to these, there is a considerable number of Chinese and East Indians, the latter especially predominating over the large African element, while the aboriginal Indians or pure Caribs, or even their highly diluted offsprings, except for a few in scattered settlements located in the hills behind the city, have all but ceased to exist.

The British Indian population, which keeps on increasing like rabbits, is made up mainly of merchants, agrarians or truck farmers and venders of sweetmeats and fruits, and are extremely picturesque, in their turbans and flowery drapery. This does not mean that they are all equally favored by Brahma or Buddha, since there exists also that element of half-naked, emaciated and spindle-legged men of Hindu Kush, Burmah and Kashmir, who go around in the skimpiest of garments, while the coolies, the former indentured or contract laborers brought over here from India and the Straits when the labor problem loomed acute, despite their sympathy-inspiring attenuated figures, do even the hardest sort of work and manual labor as fervently as if they were goaded on by the slave driver's whip.

Through the incessant bustle Arab women stride along decked in brightly colored kerchiefs and gaudy jackets of brocade and baggy trousers, while their patriarchal-looking husbands sport that aristocratic tilt of the chin with true hauteur, and are seldom seen without their turban and cane. Sprinkled through these knots we behold bright-eyed and opulently dressed buxom Jewesses, and dark-skinned coolie women flaunting barbaric jewelry, with rings in their nostrils and their arms and ankles laden with from six to eight silver bangles and bracelets.

As a delightful contrast, swarms of comely, gaudily petticoated, silk-bloused and heavily draped British Indian women, also adorned with the strangest of exotic jewelry, through nose and around arms and ankles, move gracefully through the throngs, in addition to the

rest of a heterogeneous lot of peoples scooped up, as it were, from many parts of the globe and chucked down here to loll around and vacillate and squat or sleep in streets or in the nooks and corners of Marine Square.

Through the warp and woof of this strangely patterned mosaic, countless other nationalities of every color and creed are deftly interwoven. Hence we see the often comely, almond-eyed celestial women and the enigmatic and stolid sons of Ham, who impart a tranquil, harmonious overtone to the rest of the pattern. In addition, there flits by an incongruous element of swarthy Portuguese, pink-checked but very plain-looking English girls in their sporty and dapper gait, together with their lean, pale-faced elders rubbing shoulders with hardy Scotchmen, while heavily mustached and swarthy South Americans and Spaniards and darkly bronzed Italians quietly shuffle along as if they hadn't a single care in this vale of tears. And last but not least—Lord bless 'em—with a tremendous vitality and speed and totally unmindful of the tropical heat, race the nervously scurrying American tourists, whose smart-looking, well-dressed, and often delightfully pretty girls and their companions, the older and more blasé, matter-of-fact women, equally well-groomed and smart-looking, impart a freshness to the motif that is rememorant of an exhilarating breath of wind from the north. Finally, there were the mulattos, the quadroons and mestizos and other crossbreeds in whose veins flow the corpuscles of countless peoples and races, often making the sum total an unidentifiable blending of East and West.

To complete this exotic, kaleidoscopic vignette I must include, if only briefly, a word about that stalwart and ultra-polite Trinidadian, the colored policeman who, debonair and dapper in his spotless white uniform, with gauntlets and helmet to match, will direct, with true *bonhomie*, the strangely jabbering and generally good-humored, polyglot crowd.

Now to devote just a few lines more to the coolie—which cognomen, as it is generally accepted, usually implies “porter,” whereas here the term “coolie” actually designates “indentured” or “contract” laborer: In common with the Javans and Malays who were brought from their *kampongs* in Malaysia to Guiana, the East

Indian was brought to Trinidad and to some of the other British colonies under conditions that guaranteed them a dwelling and medical attention for five years, and a wage-earner's pittance of twenty-four American cents a day, besides free passage both ways. Invariably most of them, like their Javanese contemporaries, preferred to return to India to die, differing little from the Celestial in this.

There are various coolie settlements here, where, true to their faith, the Mahometan form of worship is practiced. And they adhere just as closely to that faith as do their contemporaries at home. This Mahometan faith comes to them too as a harbinger of hope and deliverance. It gives even the most illiterate—and many of them certainly are that—a creed that they can fully understand, as well as a prayer book, the Koran, and a mosque, without which they would feel hopelessly lost.

One of the most revealing factors about these people is their marriage customs, since they marry quite young; that is to say their parents marry them off in a sort of purchase-marriage system long before the child has any notion of what it is all about. This is not so strange when one realizes that these customs are based upon Islamic tenets entirely. Marriage by purchase is the outstanding and prevalent method. Wherever Mahometans congregate a girl may be purchased at a figure dependent on her station in life. The tenets of the faith prescribe that the father becomes the owner of the daughter and may do with her as he pleases and with no one to gainsay him, which is mighty bad.

It is not uncommon therefore for coolie girls of six and seven to be joined to boys of ten to twelve, but they are not permitted under the Mahometan system to keep house nor to cohabit until the girl is about twelve and the boy fifteen. This phase is not so bad, but since the Trinidad law does not recognize them as married until the girl is sixteen and the boy eighteen, it makes for a most chaotic state of affairs.

Since the act of purchase completes the marriage in the eyes of Islamic judicial belief, the girl is first the property of her coolie pater and afterwards becomes the property of her husband. As her husband's chattel, her primary mission in life is to propagate children and to keep the race alive. This is a duty from which no

serious-minded coolie will shrink. That there are plenty of cases of wife murder among the East Indians, there is no denying. This undoubtedly is due to the very cold-blooded and cut-and-dried method of arranging these marriages at such an early age. For the possession of a woman or a girl the man will often engage in sanguinary quarrels. Therein these fellows have changed little from the habits and customs of those whose faith they have adopted. Coolie morality, or rather the lack of it, is not only founded on custom and tradition but seems to spring from a complete lack of affection between man and wife, in the sense that we know it. It is perhaps their philosophic basis of dismissing a woman merely as a breeding animal and a means of satisfying the coolie's carnal desires that forces his girl or woman to curb her own nature accordingly and respond when man demands her body. Peace remains in the coolie household as long as the wife submits to the cock-of-the-walk ways of her coolie husband. Withal, it is his faith in Kismet and that damnable indifference that make him look down on his woman as an inferior being that is there to respond to his beck and call and to gratify his sexual desires. Whether *Jus Connubii*, the paternal or rather patriarchal, seigniorial prerogative reigns among them, I was not able to find out.

Early one evening as we were about to leave the hospitable Hotel Sand for a short ride to Lady Chancellor's Hill, where a beautiful view is obtained of Port-of-Spain and the Bocas, a colored chap with an unusually pleasant manner stopped his car in the driveway and asked if he could have a word with me. His name was James Nurse, as I learned from the card he presented; his mission, to try to sell himself to me as a guide, since I had been highly recommended to him by someone who knew me. James proved, throughout our stay, a most efficient, intelligent and versatile young man, exacting in his work, who, after driving and guiding us around most of the day, would devote the remaining hours in the evening to the pursuit of his studies in medicine. He confided to us that, despite the odds that beset those of colored birth, he felt he would still amount to something in this oftentimes cruel and hypocritical world. My wife, with a compassionate and sympathetic understanding, and equally as sensitive as he, urged me to

engage him and I, relying implicitly on her seldom-failing good judgment in the appraisal of human nature and in the choice of proper associates, selected James Nurse. Thus we obtained a factotum who remained with us until we bade these heavenly shores *au revoir*; he even came to the jetty to bid us adieu. An interesting insight into this chap's nice make-up is gained from the fact that as we were leaving Trinidad, he presented my wife with a bouquet of flowers bearing a card on which he had written in most excellent penmanship the following touching words:

"In appreciation of your exaggerated
commendation of my meager services.

"JAMES NURSE."

True to form, this elicited from friend wife, who was quite moved, a few sentimental tears, while it served to strengthen further my own conviction that we mortals, white and colored alike, are all equally responsive when fed upon the milk of human kindness.

What I particularly liked about James was that total absence of forced propaganda about his native city, and that absence of familiarity that one often associates with the person of color once one begins to show *rapprochement*. James had an unostentatious, polite manner. Always, hat in hand, he would bow as he acknowledged understanding of a request to the accompaniment of his ever-courteous response, "Yes, master; yes, mistress"—as, unmindful of our protestations, he persisted in addressing us in the best Trinidadian manner. And wholly unlike many other drivers and "nestors," he modestly refrained from singing any of his own praises.

A day or so later, still somewhat shaken from the shipwreck incident, though solaced that we had escaped at least with our skins whole, we craved an hour or two of silent contemplation, either at a church or somewhere else peaceful—somewhere away from the crowd. We therefore accepted James' suggestion for us to join him in the Cathedral next morning, from where we could motor to the place that he recommended for the good of our souls.

Six o'clock Mass at Port-of-Spain's Cathedral was a most colorful

affair. We were amazed at the variegated gathering of whites and colored folks. The edifice, packed to overflowing with believers in this great faith, was not only sprinkled with the *crème de la crème* of Port-of-Spain's élite but its large aisles were also beneficently studded with sisters and nuns, and with the liberally calicoed colored natives from the nearby market. Yet this large stone edifice of worship and its picturesque, colorful service had not supplied exactly the spiritual solace I sought, so after James had done his duty of prayer, incantation and offering, we made our exit.

We motored to Mount St. Benedict, within a small distance outside Port-of-Spain, where resides a community whose watchword is "PAX," and where, as the well-informed James confided, we would find those few hours of real peace that we sorely needed. I am happy to say we did find peace.

After a delightful, early morning drive, whirling around hairpin bends through the Indian settlement, we came to a hilly section where, climbing upwards past deep ravines and precipices and towering rocks, and enjoying the cool breezes, we reached at last the outskirts of a monastery. We finally stopped before two concrete pillars on which had been chiseled the word PAX; nor on closer acquaintance did this belie the peace that we subsequently found there. Here, in a monastery situated some three hundred and fifty feet up on Mount Benedict's sides, the Lord Abbot and the Order's thirty or so faithful Benedictine Monks (including one, a Hollander, who, curiously enough, hailed from Rotterdam) dispense an innate hospitality and labor unselfishly in accordance with the tenets of their Order.

Before the monastery itself could be reached, we came to the closed gates marked "no admittance," and since women are religiously barred, we stopped first at the inviting rest-house, at whose entrance also was displayed the sign, PAX. This rest-house, delightfully perched on an eminence, has been created for the pleasure and accommodation of visitors and guests. We inspected the spacious and attractively furnished individual guest rooms, designed by Brother Gabriel, which are rented at moderate prices to all convalescents and others in need of a rest. Here, in a charmingly furnished dining room, we had breakfast. No place in all Trinidad, for simple, dignified appointments and modern con-

veniences, and for a "feast for the nerves," could have any greater appeal.

As we were enjoying the splendid repast that for choice and preparation hardly could be excelled, we beheld, high up, Mount Tabor's crest, while below, a magnificent panorama of the villages and town is unfolded. Still farther out lie the ship-studded gulf and harbor; the swamp of Caroni, and 'way in the offing the Imperial College of Agriculture, at San Fernando; and through the distant haziness even the foothills and mountain chain of neighboring Venezuela are exposed to view.

The innate charm here was the very setting itself, though actually one must hesitate to speak further of the glorious view to be seen at the foot of the Monastery, for fear one may be accused of exaggeration.

The dense woods of Bois Immortel were in full bloom. The whole countryside beneath seemed to glow and shimmer with a radiance ranging from vivid indigo to the gold of the broad acres of grain and intermingling with the startling crimson of the poppies.

And then there was the silence. Dimming our voices, we spoke not for minutes, lest we disturb the glorious serenity of this moment when solitude was the only sound, and where there was perfect peace. Here, with Emerson, I could say aptly, "We can hear the whispers of the Gods."

With the pealing of bells which called the friars to prayer and which brought us back from our cosmic reflections to our own material existence, my Dutch-speaking Friar friend had come to fetch me and to act as my Cicerone to the Monastery itself, where I was to visit the monks at work.

Visiting the chapel, which had been excellently and artistically created by their own hands, I tarried awhile in the cozy and well-stocked library, with its rows of precious volumes—good reading for even the most erudite scholar. Through its windows I beheld not only a view of the cemetery where the deceased are laid to rest in a colorful garden, but also the vegetable gardens and the apiary where the unexcelled honey is turned out by the bees whose buzzing and zooming imparted a strange undertone to the otherwise so

serene surroundings. I took away with me a jar of this honey and it was the best I have tasted—before and since.

When I had seen all, including the Monastery's workshop, etc., we returned to the gate again, where, thanking the Holland Friar for his kindness, I scrambled down a footpath to the rest-house.

Most regretfully we took leave of Mount Benedict and motored back to the hustle and bustle, thankful nevertheless for having found a place where abounds a true "peace on earth"!

Another trip of great diversity and color is the one made by government excursion boat, the "St. Patrick," to the Five Islands and the Bocas, although the stopover I made at the Garden of Eden for the Lepers, at Chacachacare, reveals a more realistic phase of life. This trip proved that there are numerous ways of spending a holiday in Trinidad, some of which may include motor-ing, swimming, horseback riding, hiking—and last but not least, fishing—which was undoubtedly also discovered by President Roosevelt, who must have found the waters of the Bocas much to his liking while he was en route from South America recently. I can't help wondering whether the President has also discovered that due to the absence of attractions detrimental to the magnetic needle that cause the usual deviations, the compass can be used with a greater degree of efficiency in Trinidad than in any other part of the world. I remember having read in the *Trinidad Guardian* an interesting article touching upon the reasons for this phenomenon. It was shown that as far back as 1895 the conclusion was arrived at that the island of Trinidad seemed to be almost free from the local magnetic attraction usually met within other tropic countries. This may be said to be due to the absence of church steeples, grain elevators or lone trees. It further disclosed that the declination of the magnetic needle—in other words, the difference between the true north and magnetic north—was about five degrees, or 45 minutes west, in Trinidad, moving in a westerly direction about ten minutes a year, while in our own country and many others the declination is much greater. It therefore becomes obvious that many companies making scientific instruments actually come to Trinidad to adjust them. Besides, all instruments used for surveying work—that is, including the theodolite—can be

best adjusted at Port-of-Spain, where a standard reference-mark that is free from all local attractions is set up in the Savannah. All compass bearings throughout Trinidad are adjusted at this mark and while the magnetic needle could never be an instrument of high precision the errors occurring here are usually very slight.

With this digression, I return to the Boca trip and my hobby of fishing. And while on the subject of fish, I am reminded of a legend that, if I remember correctly, was related to me by Monsieur Ambard, the publisher and editor of the *Trinidad Gazette* and one of the most delightful personages whom we had the pleasure to meet in Port-of-Spain, and whose charming hospitality we also enjoyed. He is a living lexicon, so to speak, of anything one desires to know. From him, we learned that the small and very savory Trinidad oysters are not cultivated in beds, as in Zeeland (Holland), or Long Island, or at Cape Cod and elsewhere along our American coast, but grow instead upon roots, and upon the branches, or on the five-to-ten-feet-tall roots of red mangrove trees, which droop way down into the shallow and often swampy water adjacent to the sea. Sir Walter Raleigh also became well acquainted with their delectability. As for the legend, it relates to a brilliantly scaled fish, sporting the musical-sounding name of Cascadura, which is said to be indigenous to the Trinidadian waters and is found nowhere in the rest of the West Indies. Its firm, toothsome flavor is considered by gourmands throughout the fair island the *cygne noir* of perfection.

According to the Cascadura legend, in which so many firmly believe, a visitor to Trinidad, once he partakes of a dish of Cascadura, will either reside there forever or will return to spend his last days within its verdured borders. What is more, so I understood Monsieur Ambard to say, as he twisted his ferocious-looking mustache and winked slyly at me, in his tiny editorial office, "Those that have gone away from Trinidad always come back." But he did not add whether those that come back do so because they have partaken of the fair Cascadura or whether the enchantment of this blessed isle is the real attraction. Whichever it may be, I have never eaten of the Cascadura, as far as I can remember, yet I found Trinidad one island where I could go back again and again and where I could even live forever and ever quite happily.

As you may recall, I referred to Galera Point's northeastern promontory. It is from this point, with its numerous fishing settlements, that a great number of fishing smacks, frail dugout canoes and piroques of all sizes venture out to the sea, whose waters swarm with schools of fish. Snugly hugging the margin of narrow bays, one beholds not only the amateur Izaak Waltons, who are after snappers, familiar to even the palates of American ichthyophagi, but also the merchant fishermen, responsible for many of the fine fish on the tasty menus of Pierre Sand. Among these are the sweet and toothsome jewfish, the golden and crimson-hued parrot fish and many other denizens of the deep whose names I cannot remember at the moment. The supreme delight of all fishermen in these waters is the barracouta, or barracuda, specimens of which must even have graced the hook of our fisherman President. This fish resembles a large pike in shape, is rapacious and can shoot through the water at a speed greater than even King Salmon, of our Fraser, Skeena or British Columbia rivers.

The round trip through this fisherman's paradise, on board the "St. Patrick," covers about thirty miles, and every league of it is replete with beauty of a diversified kind, ranging from the Five Islands, honeymoon isles with their small cottages just made for two, to Carrera, Trinidad's penal colony, and Gaspar Grande, Point Gourde, seaside resorts for the more affluent and ideal spots for picknickers, lovers, spooners and honeymooners, all patronized quite nicely, by all that bill and coo, for that very purpose.

All about are charming Lilliputian bathing beaches and tiny coves, sea-washed crags, and even great monstrous caverns, into whose gaping mouths one may venture in quiet weather. In the bowels of these cliffs, so I learned, dwell the Guacharos, or Devil Birds, the bewhiskered birds of Theodore Roosevelt fame. Legend has it that these alleged nut-eating birds so reek with grease that the natives use them as butter. Legend has it also that they run some sort of wick through the bodies of these birds and transform them quite conveniently into candles. This questionable information, like the stories of hidden pirate treasure along these fairy-like scrags and caverns on the shore, should be taken with sufficient grains of salt.

To prove that I do not forget our millions of American anglers, let me give for their benefit just a few more particulars about this

fisherman's haven, where tarpon, battling barracuda, kingfish and a host of other gamey denizens provide all the fun of which, for instance, the members of the Society of Salt Water Anglers of America would ever dream. Being an angler myself, having served my apprenticeship in Holland waters when I was a boy, I know what a true fisherman looks for. All that he seeks he can get in Trinidad for the mere asking.

I spent two days in a special fishing cruiser, swivel seat in the stern, minus the awning that obstructs the free action of the rod. I have reason to believe that there are now more of these comfortable fishing boats that cover the delightful fishing waters around the Bocas, Farallon off San Fernando, Point Baleine and even nearby Tobago. They are all after the big fish of the Gulf Stream, who may be found not only on the South American Main, but also in the beautiful Gulf of Paria, and the Bocas, the happy fishing ground of this area.

Well within the lee of the island, in Chacachacare, whose spiked cacti leaves no doubt as to its rocky scraggy formation, our boat anchored in as attractive a little bay as any, at the base of the Lazareth. Above towered the lighthouse and below, hugging the water's edge, almost a paradox in so beautiful a setting, are maintained the dual government leper colonies, Trinidad's Molokai. Here I went ashore.

It is a consoling thought to find a veritable Garden of Eden set aside for the good of a segregated portion of humanity and for the cure of a horrible disease. According to an Associated Press message from Manila, the Dean of George Washington University states that the true germ of leprosy has been isolated. If this is so, scientists may hope to develop an antigen for skin tests that will perfect immunity and that will enable them to prevent leprosy. If this can be done, all the hardships endured and sacrifices made in the age-old struggle against this scourge will not have been in vain.

Briefly, for those who may not know, leprosy is essentially a skin disease, its specific organism being the *bacillus lepra*. After the germ enters the body the disease remains latent in the system for a considerable period, oftentimes from three to four years of incubation, before any symptoms are manifest.

Three types of leprosy exist: the tubercular or nodular, which

is a skin type; leprosy of the nerve, or the anaesthetic kind; and a combined form. In nerve leprosy the nerves are affected in such a way that anaesthesia, or a complete loss of movement, results, beginning in the hands and feet and traveling upward over the body. The nerves thicken in structure, and loss of feeling is followed by the loss of fingers and toes and the skin becoming glazed.

In leprosy of the skin, an acute attack of the disease is usually characterized by a thickening of the skin, the formation of ulcers and a weakening of the whole body, including the eyes, which become sightless.

While not desirous at this time nor, I confess, competent to go into a lengthy disquisition and analysis of the scourge, I should like to describe some of its rudimentary aspects, since the disease, however tropical, has not failed to leave its ugly imprint upon many here in America (a fact which has very seldom been publicized). I have visited Molokai, Culion island in the Philippine Archipelago and the leper colonies in the Netherlands East Indies, as well as those closer to our shores, such as Bethesda and Châtillon, in Netherlands Guiana, the one just outside of La Guyara, Venezuela, and the one now under discussion, at Chacachacare near Port-of-Spain. I learned that not all lepers are a danger to the community, something which I did not know, when in September of the year 1936 I visited Paramaribo again. Furthermore, leprosy is usually contracted after prolonged association with the diseased and it is not hereditary. A child of parents in an advanced stage of the disease may be born healthy, but it may become leprous if left with its parents. I have seen actual cases of wee mites smitten with the scourge, and they present a most heartrending spectacle.

If you will peruse my latest book, "Crossroads of the Caribbean Sea," in which I touched upon this scourge and its treatment in Guiana from another angle, you will discover that I stated that leprosy is curable, though from earliest times the opposite has been thought. There have been all sorts of medicaments for its cure, including ethyl ester preparations, Antileprol, Gurjun oil, ichthyol, salvarsan, tuberculin, euophen, methylene blue and aristol. The ethyl ester preparations of chaulmoogra and the Hydnocarpus oils have, when used intramuscularly and intravenously, proved most successful, not only here but everywhere they are used, and have

proved a veritable blessing to a suffering mankind. Chaulmoogra oil is obtained from the ripe fruit of the tree called *Taraktogenos kurzii*, found in the Assam valley and the Chittagong Hill tracts of India. The fruit itself contains a large number of small seeds from which the oil is extracted.

The *Hydnocarpus* oil is secured from the *Hydnocarpus wightiana*. Various members of this tree genus are found in Southern India, Ceylon, Burma and Assam. As I write these pages I recall now that the doctor in charge at Chacachacare informed me, when I visited the place a number of months ago, that the apple-like fruit of the *Hydnocarpus anthelminticus* tree is cultivated now even in South America. I have examined this fruit, which contains many small seeds similar to those of a pomegranate apple. As I pressed one of the seeds between my thumb and forefinger, a heavy oil exuded, giving off a rather unpleasant odor that reminded me for a moment of the smelly Dourian fruit indigenous to Java. Despite its odor, however, this oil is the best therapeutic agent known in the treatment of leprosy.

When I enquired of the various physicians as to when chaulmoogra oil was first known to have served mankind, I was told to turn back the pages of history to the time of King Rama of Benares in India. Yet it was left to Sir Leonard Rogers, an Englishman, to prove to the world in 1918 the value of the active principles of the acid fats in chaulmoogra oil. This does not mean that it had not been used before, outside of India. I have reason to believe that as early as 1890 a Dr. Black of New Orleans was the first scientist to inject it hypodermically. Meanwhile, it had been administered through the stomach, in a raw, unpurified state. It is difficult to swallow and hard to digest, irritates the digestive tract and causes colic and intestinal trouble.

The exact origin of both the discovery and use of this most important of all oils is doubtful. Legend and geography both seem to point to a link with India and Burma, where the Indian peoples cling to a legend of the origin of chaulmoogra with astounding and unquestioning tenacity. Briefly, the facts of the legend are as follows: Rama, King of Benares, became a leper, and his medicine men could think of nothing that would cure him. Hence Rama abdicated in favor of his son and then withdrew to the jungle,

where he lived like a hermit, subsisting on nuts and especially on those of a hundred-foot-high tree bearing large yellow leaves. After some time he was cured of the scourge. Since he felt strong and actually lived a better life than he had when he was basking in all his former luxury, he became convinced that it would be folly to go back to civilization again. So he continued to reside in the hollow of a gigantic tree.

About this time there reigned in northern India a King Oksagarit, who had five sons and five daughters. His first-born, the daughter of his first wife, was named Princess Piya and was most beautiful. Unhappily, she contracted leprosy, and she too sought the solitude of the forest. Her sisters and brothers led her to a great cave in the jungle, where they left her with an assortment of food, closing the entrance to the cave with a large boulder. Attracted by the odors of food, a tiger sought entrance and Piya, frightened out of her wits, cried for help. King Rama, hearing her outcry, set out to the rescue. At last he came upon the Princess' cave and, upon hearing her story, he suggested that she come forth, promising her that he would cure her. But modest, abashed and reluctant at showing the condition she was in, Piya refused. Then Rama, more resourceful than the tiger, forced his way in and conducted Piya to the tree. He made her eat from the roots, leaves and fruit of what was later identified as the chaulmoogra tree, which had so miraculously cured him.

So it came to pass that the beautiful Piya was equally blessed, for her sores disappeared. Rama then married her, and she gave birth to twins on sixteen occasions. From that time on, so the legend continues, chaulmoogra oil has been used by the Hindus. It became a scientific medicine as the results of experiments and observations by English doctors residing in India.

Now back again to Trinidad's Chacachacare, where the afflicted men, and the women and children, live in separate sections in the colony, behind a sea wall along which they are permitted to promenade on Wednesdays, which is also their visiting day. This sea wall likewise separates the two settlements.

Men and women stricken with leprosy are kept busy constantly at some work or other, and they receive payment for the labor they do. The women live in groups of eight to a house which, quite

wisely, they are commissioned to keep spotlessly clean, for the very good reason that they are thus kept occupied and learn the lesson of cleanliness, lack of which has been their undoing. Cleanliness is one of the big factors in curing the disease.

The patients are divided into groups and each patient receives injections in the muscle of the thigh or arm. The doses are gradually increased, until the first reactions set in, such as loss of appetite, general debility, increase in temperature. If the reactions become too violent, the doses are diminished accordingly.

I also visited the children's ward here, seeing which caused many tugs at the heartstrings. I was grateful to think that my wife had not come along. In addition, I made a tour of the spick-and-span kitchens, where the wholesome, well-chosen food is prepared by healthy persons, and the fully equipped hospitals, the dispensary and a number of other places, such as the recreation grounds. On all sides that great benefactor, the Church, represented by many factions and orders, such as the Catholic, Anglican, Protestant, Dominican Friars, etc., may be seen dispensing its mercy and spiritual healing. If ever there was need for godly or spiritual administrations, it is here.

While I am still on the subject, however unpleasant it may be, I recall now that leprosy is not the only scourge which infests Leper Island. This place, like all of Trinidad, suffers visitations of the *Cheroptera*, or Vampire bats, and lights are burned in the cottages all night to scare them away. These bats are of the fruit-eating variety and are especially addicted to the star apple trees. Frequently these unwelcome visitors descend in huge numbers upon the Botanical Gardens, carrying off the fruit.

The particular species that infest the Leper Island are the blood-sucking mammalians, the *Molossi Noctilian*, and *Phyllostoma* genus. These bloodthirsty devils suck the blood of man and beast, and they are so numerous in certain sections that many persons have been bitten more than once during the night. My own experiences in the interior of Borneo, where these selfsame or almost similar species of bats abound, have left me with most unpleasant recollections of them. Although it caused me no pain, one of these disagreeable bats bit my foot.

The only protection against these creatures is a lightweight but

sturdy mosquito netting, although I do recall that once, when my wife and I were having supper in the Dutch-Guiana bush country, within the supposed protection of a mosquito net, a bat succeeded in venturing in. He was promptly dispatched to Kingdom Come, and, during the autopsy, proved to be a vampire. But my fellow travelers and myself concealed the information from my wife. The loss of blood from repeated vampire-suckings is so great that even large animals become immediately enfeebled and may die within two or three weeks.

The colored captain of the "St. Patrick," apparently a very able mariner, told me something that I had not known, but which I subsequently read about in Sir Aspinall's travel narrative.

To exchange the unpleasant subject of leprosy and bats for one less macabre, there is a legend linked with friend Columbus' meanderings through the Gulf of Paria, about Point Icacos. Here, solemnly declared the captain, on August 2, 1498, the great Columbus lost an anchor. This anchor was discovered in 1877, much to the satisfaction of the people of Port-of-Spain, who display it in perfect faith at the Victoria Institute (though my advice is, take another pinch of salt). Its discovery, like so many of Columbus' discoveries, furnishes just cause for a holiday, known as Discovery Day, which is celebrated annually. Travelers may recall that another anchor of Columbus graces the portico on the first floor of the beautiful white palace of President Stenio Vincent in Port-au-Prince, although I do not believe that the discovery of this anchor resulted in a Haitian holiday.

The great scenic treats that James Nurse dished up for our enjoyment not only included many trips to the Botanical Gardens, which are a true botanist's delight, but to the sugar plantations and cocoa groves as well. I shall postpone my description of the beautiful gardens until my trip back from the sugar estates near San Fernando and Diego Martin, and the cocoa estates, many of which we shall see on our way to Blue Basin.

To get to these plantations we proceed over a network of very fine roads, whose main arteries are the eastern and southern sections, with smaller roads leading into them, up to St. Joseph, where the Imperial College of Agriculture is located. From St. Joseph

one treks via St. John to Arima, which at one time was one of the four missions of the isle. Here the southern road turns south and the eastern road traverses the islands to the East Coast. Another road, skirting the seacoast, leads westward, through the British Indian settlements and almost endless cocoanut forests until the bathing beach at Macqueripe Bay is reached. Another branch of the network follows the coastline to Tetron Bay, facing the Bocas, also a favorite bathing resort.

At the sleepy small town of St. Joseph, named after Don Josep de Oruna, who founded this city inland on the Caroni River, and but a few miles from the Indian settlement, the Imperial College of Agriculture has its headquarters. It was founded in 1921, incorporated by Royal Charter and is the brainchild of the late Lord Milner, who for many years had cherished the desire to establish such an institution as this in the tropics.

This college functions along the same lines as those in Georgetown, British Guiana, and other West Indian places, or the Buitenzorg garden in distant Java. It is actually a gigantic laboratory for intensive tropical research, where one may receive thorough enlightenment and training before embarking upon the career of planter of tropical products.

A mere visit to this college provides a liberal education. One soon learns that many of the leading universities in the British Empire, including Cambridge College and the Imperial College of Science, have contributed generously to its work, as have the famous Gardens at Kew and the cotton growers' and sugar industries. The college has a most imposing staff of experts in the fields of chemistry, genetics, bacteriology, mycology, entomology, soil science, agriculture, economics and Lord knows how many other important adjuncts to the sciences of Mother Nature.

It has been supported not only by the British Government, but also by liberal contributions from all the British West Indian islands and from the cotton industry of Lancashire, which went to the extent of erecting a large dormitory for the accommodation of students, who used to reside in boarding houses nicknamed Sing-Sing. It may be interesting to note that the Rockefeller Foundation has contributed five thousand dollars, for five years, toward establishing a chair for Sanitation and Hygiene, while the

Carnegie Foundation, as might be surmised, has not failed to contribute a similar amount towards the upkeep or enlargement of a library.

Just beyond St. Joseph and the Caroni River, and within easy reach of the college, a sugar estate and Trinidad's largest sugar factory, the Ursine St. Madeleine, are located. It was to that section that I wended my way, starting from San Fernando, the second town in importance in Trinidad and thirty-five miles by road around the Caroni swamp. This factory, which turns out the Trinidadian sugar for which the island is famed, is fed not only by cane from its own plantations, but also by those of many small farmers of cane.

The system of having small planters work on contract, so prevalent in other islands and in the Indies, is advantageously followed here. These minor agrarians are encouraged to plant, and assured an outlet for their product, while over all watches a union, the Cane Growers Association, which guarantees to them a sliding scale in price, dependent on the fluctuation of the market.

Like everything else in tropical agriculture, the cultivation of sugar, and its subsequent metamorphosis into the finest of crystals, is an interesting one, no matter whether one visits Mauritius, Porto Rico, the huge enterprise at Marienburg in Dutch Guiana, Demarara or Caroni. Basically the procedure is all the same, though the facilities employed may vary.

First the cane is cut near the ground. The arrowhead is cut off and the cane thrown to the side on a truck and collected. Once the cutlass of the British Indian laborer, in the early morning hour, has completed its deadly chopping through these never-ending battalions of larger-than-man-size cane-brakes, the cane is loaded in little trains whose toy-like locomotives keep on feeding the sugar mill from morning till night. This process is accomplished by gibbet-like derricks, with grappling hooks and chains, which seize load after load and lift them unceremoniously in the air, many cane sticks dropping by the wayside to be thrown in again later. At the edge of the large factory, which may be said to be the factory's insatiable maw, giant hooks clutch the massive canes, drag them from the train and drop them on the cane carrier, the endless conveyor, and the actual work of sugar-making is begun.

Now ensues a terrific noise, brought about by the scrunching and whir of machinery, the breaking of the brittle and often hard cane between the modern crushers and relentless rollers, between whose pressure the cane is deprived of its juice. These modern crushers extract ninety per cent of the juice, of which about eighteen per cent is the sucrose, or sugar. The residue passes on to another platform, to a second gigantic set of rollers, even more powerful than the first, where as much as possible of the remaining juice is extracted by the latest improvement in machinery. The nitrogenous and organic acid substances in the juice are neutralized and removed by the addition of lime. Then the heating and separation of the *dross*, or the scum, follow.

The purified juices next are evaporated in vacuum pans until the formation of the crystals. These vacuum pans are ordinarily large and closed metallic retorts which are so connected with the exhaust apparatus that a partial vacuum is formed within, allowing evaporation and condensation to take place at lower atmospheric pressure and at lower temperature than would ordinarily be necessary. After cooling the *magma* in the storage tanks, the crystals are separated from the molasses by a centrifugal process. These crystals then are light brown in color. They are dried in hot tubes and sized by sifters. The molasses is subjected to further refining and concentration, by which a second crop of sugar is obtained. Of what remains, the dross is converted into rum and part of the rest is used as a cattle food, while the fine *megass* (the cane residue that is crushed) is fed through the hoppers into the furnaces.

There is another form of sugar-making, the oldest form known, which is the muscovado process. This produces the unrefined, or raw, sugar—moist and dark-colored, due to the presence of impurities obtained from the juice by evaporation and after draining the molasses.

The muscovado process is as follows: After heating to a required temperature, impurities are eliminated, a mixture of lime is added and the juice is then passed through a series of tanks. Evaporation by boiling ensues and the residue is allowed to crystallize. When sufficiently solidified, it is transferred to coolers, there cooled and drained, and the sugar is ready.

As to the genus sugar itself, it belongs to a natural order of

grasses, has a smooth stem and rises to a great height, sometimes even reaching from twelve to fourteen feet. It has an imposing plume and is cultivated from seed (hence the seed beds, where later on the cuttings of the best varieties are grown for testing and improving the species and sugar contents). Each joint in the cane has a bud which is capable of developing into a new plant, conditions being favorable. The sugar plant flowers after a year and its sweet life on this blessed earth of ours endures at least ten years, in virgin soil.

Ever since people were said to have a sweet tooth, the British West Indian Islands have become known as the sugar islands, whose planters are completely obsessed by the notion of raising cane. An acre of sugar in the hand, they once said, was worth ten acres of any other tropical in the bush. This staple, at one time in the latter part of the eighteenth century, monopolized by the British, raised a lot of "cain" with the American colonists when they were prevented from exporting to Europe cotton, sugar, molasses and rum. A hundred years later, however, the raw sugar duty was abolished in America, enabling refiners to purchase their raw sugar in the West Indies at a much lower cost, and to mutual benefit.

This brief review of the outstanding points in connection with West Indian sugar would not be complete if I failed to refer to Pitt's revival of the forgotten Sugar and Molasses Act of 1733, by which the importers of French molasses were required to pay a prohibitive duty of sixpence a gallon, at a time when many American merchants traded with these French in the West Indies.

Now, having said as much about sugar as I want to say, I come to cocoa, another great staple in Trinidad's life. In order to see Trinidadian cocoa in all its glory, the traveler and tourist who has at his disposal more than the few hours the steamers allow on a cruise to this port, should take a trip to Sangre Grande, a distance of some forty odd miles, where the bathing in the Atlantic surf is excellent. Stopping en route at Arima, which, as I have already pointed out, is one of the four principal Indian missions of the island, the tourist will drop, as it were, right into the heart of the interesting cocoa industry, thus killing two birds with one stone.

Capuchin Monks, sent over here from Spain in the later years of

the eighteenth century, may be said to have been responsible for the industry in this section. Their missions, originally intended for the uplifting of the "poor natives," as some understand the purpose for which missions function, became, curiously enough, large agricultural units, with the main staple cocoa, besides catch crops of other eatables, such as cassava and bananas, planted between, and acting as shade-giving trees, or "mammias," as they are called even to this day. Near here is Salybia (reminiscent in name of Dominican Salybia, where the Caribs sought refuge from the onslaughts of the British) and its beautiful bay, on the east coast. In fact there are two bays, the one of Salybia, whose mighty rollers from the Atlantic are borne along by the trade wind, and the other, the Bay of Balandra, sheltered, and with a natural breakwater and quiet bay. The sandy beach of both is a beautiful white, and the water a sapphire blue.

On the south coast, moreover, well protected from the trade winds, and at the Galera Point already referred to, we have another delightful bay, that of Guyaguyaro, with the three mountains to the east, identified as the Three Sisters, the Holy Trinity of Columbus. Should the tourist with limited time be desirous of seeing cocoa pods in all their natural grandeur, I can recommend a trip to the Blue Basin, only a few miles out of Port-of-Spain, and in one of the prettiest settings, where the traveler may have a swim in a natural pool, a basin-like receptacle of crystal-clear water.

Our trip to the Blue Basin, which enabled us to see something of the island beyond the confines of the capital, was guided by our friend James Nurse, who took us to Diego Martin by car, through a beautiful mountain valley, until we came to almost endless cocoa plantations. Beautiful as was the Blue Basin, widely and not unjustly publicized, its chief charm was its setting, while the mountainous scenery and the groves of cocoa now in full bloom could hardly be excelled for tropical beauty.

At no time of the year are the cocoa trees really devoid of their multicolored pods, with its two or three pods protruding from the stem while in various stages of ripeness. The pod palette is tinted with at least four or five colors of the rainbow, ranging from a brilliant yellow to a rich and very dark crimson. At gathering time the planter and his native helpers may be seen moving through lush

foliage of broad glossy leaves, from which peep the large pods.

Early Spanish colonists have been responsible for cocoa's introduction into the island, the varieties of which are identical to those of the other cocoa-growing centers, the *Criollo* (possibly a Creole from Mexico) and the *Forastero* (identical to a Java variety) being the two best known. In this industry, too, the contract system is widely adopted. By this system, lands are leased to the small grower for at least five years, allowing him its free use and the fruit of his labor. He in turn undertakes to grow so many cocoa trees, which again are fixed at a definite price per tree, to be paid to the grower, and to revert back to the landowner after the fixed period.

It was through such cocoa country, literally one grand blaze of orange-red bois immortel, that we reached a spot where we vacated our car and began our trudge up and down the mountainous road. For a little while we trekked along level plain, but then we began a climb that did much for our respiratory systems. However, it is to be recommended for two reasons, the beauty that unfolded before our eyes being one, and the loss of a few pounds of our avoirdupois being the other.

We received a well-earned reward for going downward. When we had skirted the tangled masses of tropical vegetation, ferns of all sizes and even wild cocoa, bamboos and trees—some of which even seemed to have taken root on the rocky crags and precipices—a roar of rushing water broke the stillness of the forest, though nothing of a cascade was yet to be seen.

We continued our up-and-down trek on this road through the forest, spotted the spreading epiphyte plant subsisting on air, the laden branches of the giant silk cotton tree, and even a reddish-foliaged Mora, dark-leaved and out of place in this sub-tropical habitat, and reminding me of the Guiana forests along the Marowynne, or of the Mora forests beyond Sangre Grande. Now and then we stopped to admire a flowing vine of lilac, or a liana that had scrambled to the top of a tree.

Butterflies of all colors and hues flitted across our path into the brush and the ravines below. Just before a crossing, the sound of falling water again reached our ears, but somewhat stronger. At length we reached a level stretch of pathway and, once around a

bend, we received the full benefit of the fall's rumble. Below shimmered the pool, a basin-like receptacle, hollowed out of rock through countless centuries by water falling from a height of sixty feet. Its setting was a framework of tangled vegetation of ferns and vines of all descriptions.

The Blue Basin waterfall is so named because of the delicate tint of the water. Its setting is so serene that only an artist, harnessing to his genius all the elemental forces of light and shadow, could truly depict the gentle quality of its beauty.

Blue Basin Fall, however, is not the only one in this region, because a few miles to the northeast of the capital one may enjoy the Maracas Falls, whose cascade has a drop of over three hundred feet to the numberless rocks that lie at its feet, wet with spray and covered with plants, ferns and much luxurious vegetation. Both falls are beautiful, but the fact of my having made five trips to the Blue Basin may give you an inkling as to which of the two had my preference.

During our stay of many days in Trinidad we often took counsel with ourselves as to the best way of spending the remainder of our sojourn. The task was not easy, for the very good reason that at every turn some new and entrancing prospect would appear. We had the choice of a trip to LaBrea, Walter Raleigh's Pitch Lake, or to the neighboring Tobago, the island that changed hands so many times, and which is oft referred to (though doubtfully) as the island on which Defoe marooned his mythical hero, our boyhood friend, Robinson Crusoe.

There remained in addition the possibilities of visits to Manzaniilla; inland Mayara, with its tropical beach, a true beachcomber's dreamland, and its forests of tall, stately, smooth-stemmed cabbage palms; or to the famed Cocal, a cocoanut-trimmed sandy beach, delightfully described by the crafty pen of Charles Kingsley. And then there were the Botanical Garden and Government House and neighboring savannah.

Still another treasure remained that, for uniqueness, seems well worthy of note. While thoroughly enjoying the hospitality of Monsieur Ambard, I ran across a veritable entomological storehouse, methodically arranged and indexed, a collection of butterflies, insects, bugs and others such as cockroaches, scorpions, crick-

ets, fireflies, centipedes, larvae of insects and their nymphs, a collection that would make entomologists sick with envy. A splendid time was had by all, inspecting this treasure, and its young but ambitious owner, Mr. Ambard, Jr., waxed quite enthusiastic as he described his collection. While probably only an entomologist could fully appreciate the value of his collection, yet those who cannot lay claim to be experts or authorities on such things would still delight, as I did, in seeing these, again and again, under his kindly guidance.

To begin with, there were a great number of different species of fireflies which, with the humming birds, represented the *pièces de résistance*. Fireflies seem to be most numerous in the months of November and December, disappearing until after the heavy rains in April and May, when they come forth again in all their phosphorescent glory. It is from the front portion of the thorax that their brilliant intermittent light shines, and what is quite interesting is that not only the male but also the female of the species gives such light.

In another tray Monsieur Ambard had the fire beetles arranged. These are much larger in size, and had a distinct, tough back, which is called a luminous proboscis, and which emits the light. Another, and more common species, uses its eyes as lamps, although it has another light somewhere below. As I have already observed, the sparks created by these insects seldom last for more than half an hour, though an occasional spark may continue for many hours.

Next to the fire beetles was a tray devoted to spiders ranging in size from the most infinitesimal, the common house spider, to the hairy tarantula. This tray proved a rich field of study. We learned that there are some spiders that build replicas of themselves, providing an actual decoy whence they dart out upon their prey. There are others that either plant moss on their hiding places or prepare a strange-looking contraption, not unlike a hammock, from which they beleaguer their assailants and prey. There is also a cunning little creature which deftly conceals its presence by folding itself into a covering, while hanging a trap-door from the center of its web.

The cicada tray came next. These insects are known for their steady whir and siren-like whistles. I noticed also a mantis, which

resembles a leaf in appearance and, by its sinuous movements, imitates the movements of a leaf in the breeze.

Of the *diurnal lepidopterous* varieties (which to you and me are just plain butterflies) the size and the variety of the collection was simply amazing, though many species I had seen in their habitat in the South American and even Asian forests and jungles. This collection ranged from the tiniest of moths to the huge and indescribably beautiful Sphynx, displaying their beauty in all colors of the rainbow, transparent and deeply toned. The most striking one, however, was the light azurean and opal blue, bearing a sheen reminiscent of mother of pearl, whose counterpart had flitted by me, and which I had tried to capture, without success, on numberless occasions in the Guiana forests during my last Guiana jungle trip.

As we stood gaping at the larger collection of the many species of ants and termites, which seem to abound in Trinidad in as many varieties as in the countries in the zones further south, I could not help relating to the charming audience my experience on numberless occasions with that strange-looking monster, the ant-bear, with its tapering snout, great claws and powerful fore-legs. I have watched from a safe place in hiding as it went through an ant hill with a rapidity that was simply astounding. I often wondered why animals of such size and ferocity, at least in appearance, were meant by their creator to feed on such tiny creatures.

The same thought holds for that other ant devourer, the Metaperro, the great anteater, or sloth, and armadillo, whom I have seen crawl about at night in search of food near the camp we had made. For hours I have watched the antics of these ungainly beasts in the forests, who move about stealthily and then, when running across an ant hill or ant track, insinuate their filiformed tongues into the nest. The ants become entangled in the saliva which covers the anteater's long tongue and are devoured by the myriads, until every ant in sight is gobbled up.

Why the anteater is provided with such vicious claws and powerful arms was brought home to me later, when I witnessed an attack upon it by a band of wily peccaries. The anteater tried to defend itself by throwing itself upon its back and so awaited

the attack. It then frantically seized one of the peccaries with its arms and claws, which it plunged in murderous embrace into the peccary's body. The rest of the peccaries thought twice before attacking the anteaters, and for once an anteater came out unscratched.

I have read a remarkable dissertation dealing with Trinidad's ant kingdom in a book by De Verteuil, which was published in 1884, and from which, so it seemed, many later writers on the island have culled their information. Verteuil states that "of the numberless varieties of ants, some twenty distinct species were known, several tribes of which inhabited the high woods, while others make towns or dwelling houses and haunts of men their happy hunting ground. They vary from one twelfth to about three-quarters of an inch in length, some bite, others sting, several have a very strong and unpleasant odor, some raise their hillocks from under ground, others again build in decayed trees, a few in the hollows of living trees and others again build a regular kind of mortared nest against the trunk or larger branches of the trees, in a manner similar to the wasps or termites."

Several of the species that inhabit houses were in young Monsieur Ambard's collection and are worthy of some mention. For instance, there were the common stinging black ants. They build their nests underground, or at the root of plants. Their method of building is interesting. They build rows of covered galleries along stems and twigs; then they devour the bark of the roots or stem, so that the plant, deprived of nourishment, soon perishes. These black beggars sting very severely, as both my wife and I have had occasion to learn, and, when disturbed, they rush out in numbers like a grand army and sting most fiercely.

The red stinging ant species, one of which is the sugar ant, I inspected with more than casual interest, for I have met them not only in this hemisphere but also in Malay Asia.

This sugar ant was the smallest ant in the collection. It stings like the dickens, and the burning and itching sensation it causes lasts more than half an hour. These little devils have a preference for sweets and olive oil, so that should you go housekeeping in Trinidad, or wherever these little fellows thrive, just be sure to place those articles beyond their reach.

The black and red ants move slowly. But the ones that, like the proverbial scurrying ants, are always in a hurry, are called the black crazy ants. These do not bite or sting. They are about one-eighth of an inch in length, and move forward and backward and sideways, as if hit by a firecracker, hence their nickname. These fellows are also very fond of all that is sweet and appetizing, are very carnivorous, providing, as De Verteuil said, "a great deal of amusement to me, as I observed thousands of them carting away large cockroaches and other dead insects."

It is a well-known fact that once they behold something crawling, news is sent by short wave in all directions of the compass to their tribe, and then follows the attack. While the crawling adversary may put up a battle, or may contract (as, for instance, a caterpillar) in self-defense, they hold fast. Fresh recruits come to the assistance and invariably the subjugation of the victim is the result. That unfortunate's body is then carried in a grand procession, part hoisted upwards, part pulled forwards, to the nest, where the ants, unable to get it inside, carve up the meat like butchers and carry the food inside, bit by bit, on the shoulders of the porter ants.

Young Ambard drew particular attention to a tray on which were the dry remains of the Hunter ant, of a brown color, with an abdomen lighter than the thorax and head, and about one-third of an inch long. I learned that this one is as active in its movements as it is ferocious in its attack. It is exclusively carnivorous and, after killing its small, or even very large, prey, divides it into portions, with each Hunter carrying away its share of the spoil. Hunters do not build nests, but thrive in the recesses of decayed trees among dry leaves, forming a mass two feet in diameter, where they live during the dry months, after which they set out (with their larvae close to their body) on their predatory expeditions.

Now, I have seen these particular Hunters in action; have even tried to film, or take a picture, of the Hunter army, which, on the march, has a frontage of from five to six feet and is ten feet deep. First one beholds the regular army, followed by columns two, three and four, which, forming often into one column, cleverly keep at least a mile away from the expeditionary force. The dirty

work of the army begins when they reach out, in octopus-like destruction, into almost every direction. Nothing remains unvisited. Not only smaller animals come in for their wrath, but even larger animals feel their onslaught. They kill every living thing in the line of their march. They even assail birds in their nests. The weaker fry, such as scorpions, crickets, cicadas, and such, are carried away. The Hunters fight shy, however, of the nests of Parasol ants, who are as brave as the Hunters, and have been known to put up fierce battle. Their visits to houses are counted, in some instances, a blessing, since not a single rat, or mouse, centipede or scorpion, escapes their eager voracity. These Hunter ants are also great army engineers and bridge builders. For instance, once they arrive at a hollow of water which they cannot cross, a consultation follows. Then they ingeniously construct a bridge-like affair. While I have never personally seen them do it, I have been assured that the following is the case, although for its veracity I would not vouch: They take a strong hold on the water's bank and, by hanging on to each other's legs, endless numbers of volunteers stretch out to form a sort of suspension bridge or endless chain, over which the grand army continues to move forward. When the whole army has moved over, the bridge is taken down, so to speak, by a reversal of the process.

The Hunter ants are described as having wings, when they arrive at a house, for instance, but once their gorging there is over, they emerge wingless (thus a "Wingless Victory," with apologies to Maxwell Anderson and Katharine Cornell). They then take their siesta in vast dark masses in the garden. I would like to conclude this ant-chapter by referring to something else that a member of the Ambard house party related, pertaining to fireflies. The small species have a phosphorescent light only on the abdomen, which sparkles as they breathe, but the larger ones have lights in two places, two round ones above the eyes and another on their abdomen when in flight. There was much more that Monsieur Ambard disclosed about his peregrinations in quest of these interesting denizens, but I had better stop right here, lest the account become too lengthy. Instead, I will take you with me on a tour of the Botanical Garden.

The Department of Agriculture of Trinidad and Tobago issues,

for the price of one shilling, a fine guide to the Royal Botanic Garden, prepared by the able pen of R. O. Williams, its superintendent, and which visitors to Trinidad, who will undoubtedly wish to visit these gardens, should purchase.

When Charles Kingsley visited Trinidad in 1869 the Botanical Garden, in which he took such great delight, had already had fifty years of life, since it was established in 1818, seventy-five years after the Botanical Gardens at Buitenzorg, Java, had been instituted as a relief station for the then fever-ridden Batavia.

The Trinidad garden, enriched with many varieties of plants and trees from neighboring St. Vincent, has now, for a long time, been the pride of the British West Indies. A variety of tree ferns, shade trees, windbreak trees, pergola vines, forage plants, ornamental shrubs, palms, bamboos, spice trees, orchids and many of the most beautiful flowers known to the world have been assembled here in such delightful surroundings that one can spend days in this spot and never get enough of its beauty.

For here we have the Cannon-ball trees, with great balls protruding from them; Women's tongue trees, with pendulous pods that, like some of us mortals' tongues, rattle continually; and the sand-box trees, from which one can cut strips or slices of beef, and of which I have spoken elsewhere, and whose seed pods burst with a detonation that one can hear from quite a distance. Also included is a Wallaba, or Bootlace, tree, which derives its name from its pink flowers, pendent on long stalks. It is quite a useful tree, for it provides shingles used in roofing. Even Malaya and Java are represented, for we have the *Cassia Javanica*, or apple-blossom cassia, which flowers in May and June into rosy pink flowers, reminiscent of our own apple-blossoms. These latter two trees border the bandstand lawn on the public road.

The flower garden adjacent to the beautifully located Government House shows a great variety of annuals and shrubs. Here, to name but a few, we behold such varieties as Plumbago, Amaranthus, Cockscombs, Marigolds, Verbenas, Balsams and Bachelor Buttons. We find a curiosity, really the only one in the colony, close to the western end of the rockery—the Double Coconut, or Coco de Mer, whose two sexes are borne on two different trees. This native of the Seychelles has huge fan-shaped leaves that are

often used for protection from the heaviest tropical deluges. Its fruit, curiously shaped, the largest known fruit of any tree, takes only three years to germinate.

Almost the entire length of the Government House balustrade is a veritable flower garden, offering the pink Bougainvillea and, in the corner, a clump of double poinsettia, with its brilliant scarlet bracts, flowering from December to April.

The rockery, where you will arrive next in your slow meandering, is devoted entirely to ferns, including the giant African oil palm, which was introduced from Nigeria into Sumatra and has given rise there to an important trade in palm oil.

Near this rockery, and on the lawn, you will admire the bay tree, the balata, or bullet wood, a large native evergreen tree, which, when the trunk is bled, provides the balata gum, in substance somewhere between guttapercha and rubber. The wild jasmine, a small evergreen near by makes you inhale its delightful fragrance exuding from the trusses of slender five-inch white flowers.

In addition there are the Java Plum, a tamarind tree, and the curious Sausage tree, a native of Africa, with its deep red, unpleasant smelling flower that opens at night and drops off the next morning. Its brown fruits resemble sausages in appearance.

Further, to name only the most outstanding trees and varieties, we see the Pandanus, with its numerous stilted roots; the popular Brazil nut; the Monkey Pot; the Oil Palm; the *Elaeis Guineensis*, economically important for its fleshy outer layer of orange-yellow fruit, from which palm oil is obtained. The Palm Avenue, one of the most interesting sections, has palms from every section of the tropics, such as the Venus hair palm, the stemless cocorite, prickly stemmed palms and palms with feather and fan leaves.

I even found there the Frangipani (the Plumiera) of which I had such indelible memories from far away Bali. At the western end is the Nutmeg Ravine, at one time planted throughout with nutmegs brought from St. Vincent in 1824, and still showing some nutmeg trees. We behold here a saman, such as stands on the lawn of the savannah, alongside Government House. There is also a fig tree, akin to a banyan, and a huge one-hundred-and-twenty-

foot silk cotton tree, the *Bombax Ceila*, sacred to the colored folk because it houses their jumbies.

The banyan also held tender memories for me, for many a time I have been drinking tea on the beautiful lawn of the Hotel des Indes under the banyan tree in far away Batavia. This tree usually begins its life in mid-air, its seeds embedded in the moss of other trees, where they germinate. The tender twigs that come down to the earth twist around the tree and take root, later giving to the tree a most strangulated appearance. Near this Nutmeg Ravine I beheld a tree that interested me greatly as it must have interested all who have been in Malaysia. I refer to the Mangosteen, a native of Malaya, bearing, as many will recall, that round purplish-black fruit with a white pulp of very delicate, semi-acid flavor. The fruits from this tree, as I read in the Guidebook, were sent to her late Majesty, Queen Victoria, who cherished their delicious flavor very much.

One of the best-known trees, and also the oldest, located near the residence of the Director of Agriculture, is the *Amherstia nobilis*, a true "nobleman" at that. It was discovered in the teak forests of Burma and brought over from Calcutta in 1857. One may admire its pendulous sprays, six feet long, as I have admired many of them in the teak forests of East Java. From January to June their large vermilion-colored flowers are in bloom.

And now, for the answer to the debutante's, and practically all other women's prayers, we go onward to the Orchid House. The many varieties of orchids shown here are too numerous for me to list. Many are grown on blocks of calabash wood, or in baskets filled with broken crocks, fiber or charcoal. Some of these varieties originated in Java. There are species known as Virgin; various Bee varieties; yellow, brown and purple Butterfly; Vandas and Dendrobiums and Cattleyas. We behold also a peculiar native climber, with pitcher-like bracts.

Leaving the orchid houses, I came upon a tree that interested me strongly—the Para rubber tree, or *Hevea Brasiliensis*, developed at Kew Gardens in England from the seeds originally obtained from Brazil by Sir H. W. Wickhan in 1876. He was the father of the plantation rubber industry.

Close to the well-known Iron-wood tree lawn, so named for its

Ceylonese Iron-wood tree, whose wood is extremely hard, its leaves brilliant blood-red and its flowers snow-white, we behold the Mangoes, a Calabash tree, producing many brilliant flowers from March to May; the Candle tree, so called for its long, cylindrical yellow fruits; the Bitter Cup tree, native to Tobago, with its intensely bitter wood productive of a tonic draught; and the *Beleric Myrabolan*, of Malaya and Ceylon, yielding an inferior dye wood and tanning material. At the Cemetery Lawn and Bay Tree Avenue we come to the small enclosure, where, hedged around by China box and Frangipani, lie the remains of several Trinidadian notables, whose earliest monuments date back to 1819.

This brings us at last to an uncultivated section of the garden, bush country, so to speak, with its forest of chattering or clattering bamboos. A five-minute walk up the rising road leads us to "Look-out" or "Folly," an octagon-shaped building, surmounted by a flagstaff, that stands on "Look-out Hill." The short walk or climb is well worth the view, from here, over Port-of-Spain, of the Gulf of Paria and the peaks of the Venezuelan mountains. "Look-out" is also near a Para rubber plantation, established in 1915, on which the trees are regularly tapped, from June to January, for the latex used in the rubber industry.

The cottage used as a residence for the Governor of Trinidad is of historical interest, for it was here that Charles Kingsley stayed during his visit to the West Indies in 1869-70.

Strangely enough, as I glance over these pages of Trinidad, I find that I have not said a single word about the humming bird, and yet the island was called "Iere" by the Indians of old, or the land of the humming bird. Is it, perhaps, because there are not so many left here as I have seen in neighboring Guiana? There, as in Trinidad, I have often seen them darting from tree to tree. I even spotted a number in the huge silk cotton tree loaded with pods of silk, floating in the air. The nests of these delightful little birds are just tiny cups, little ornaments of colored bark.

For hours I have watched these graceful, swift little creatures, as they dart from tree to tree bole, or hang suspended over flowers, sucking up insects with their long and sticky tongues. It may not be generally known, but this upsets a long held theory that they were sucking the honey of the flowers. The humming sound from

which they derive their name is not caused by any actual humming but by the closeness of the quills in their wings, through which no air can pass. Their legs are tufted and their feet are decidedly weak. Their color ordinarily ranges from blue, green, copper to even a pale gray. But they change with the hour, so to speak.

Another bird, the kiskadee, with its brilliant plumage and metallic shadings, is quite common. Once the sun is up, one can see him darting about, emitting that delightful "qu'est qu'il dit? qu'est qu'il dit?" (what does he say?), which shriek or cry he continues throughout the day. This may also explain the nomenclature kiskadee.

There remains now the trip to Pitch Lake, at la Brea, which was fortunately made possible when our vessel, en route from British Guiana, stopped there to load pitch. Some have called it the tenth wonder of the world. I have yet to discover why this asphalt lake, discovered by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1595, is worthy of such a soubriquet, for my idea of a world wonder is rather different.

I remember that long before my steamer landed at Brighton I deliberated whether or not to go ashore. However, as my companion, a Mr. Stedman W. Jackson, an American, and representative of the Adding Machine or Business Machines Corporation, who was returning home from Buenos Aires, so correctly suggested, "You are there now; why fail to see it?" So I went ashore with him and the captain of the ship. I am certainly glad now that I have seen it but I would not go there again, not even for the refreshing drink that was served us in the oil company's attractive club house overlooking the bay.

La Brea may be reached by rail to San Fernando or, as I have already said, by boat direct from Port-of-Spain. The lake itself is reached by a fairly long road from the very long pier, and there is no mistaking it when one nears the pitch, for the atmosphere is heavy with sulphureted hydrogen. We were glad indeed to have shed our coats and to have donned special walking boots, because they are needed, unless one decides to go by way of the cars that wait at the long pier. But it is always a relief to get in a bit of walking, once you have the chance to move on *terra firma*.

After the discovery of the lake by Sir Walter Raleigh, the inexhaustible supplies of pitch found no takers until the year 1805, when a quantity was dispatched to England. The experiment proved unsuccessful, but subsequently a Sir Ralph Woodford also experimented to determine its usefulness. The pitch was used in Port-of-Spain to check the growth of weeds, but seems to have missed the very purpose for which it was originally intended, since it enhanced the fertility of the soil and weeds reappeared as plentifully as ever. It was then tried as a lubricant by the same enterprising Sir Ralph, who knew of no let down, and who had the carbureted hydrogen distilled from it. It was also burned on the tower of the Cathedral, but even that experiment had to be given up, for it provided no end of horrible stench. Then in 1857, a certain Lord Dundonald suggested about seven uses for the pitch, but he omitted, curiously enough, the one and only good commercial use—as a paving for roads. Since the late sixties pitch has put dollars and pounds into the coffers of the Trinidad Lake Asphalt Company, the lessee, an English company owned or controlled by Americans. Today the export of pitch reaches staggering proportions, and many are the world's pavements that owe their smoothness and absence of dust to this commodity.

Modern la Brea has replaced the forest and the malarial swamp of olden days with a neat Europeanized settlement, boasting small but comely bungalows for the whites and a village settlement or two of smaller houses for the colored help, besides a church, playgrounds, shops, golf links and a tennis court, as well as the club house already referred to, all speaking volumes for this industrial outpost of civilization.

Not many years ago it was thought that the supply of pitch was well-nigh inexhaustible, but this has been proven a fallacy, since the lake is gradually decreasing in capacity, and the level of its deposits is lower than it was a decade ago. Geologists claim that the lake is a carboniferous deposit formed by petroleum that was emitted from the sands beneath, but, as always, there is some legend. Thus, it is believed that this was once the site of an Indian village which was engulfed in pitch as a punishment meted out by the gods for having destroyed the humming birds. It is believed that bedrock will be reached before another twenty-five

years, so you had better hurry up and go to see it before it is too late.

The pitch lake itself is of bituminous matter. We trod from end to end of this oozy black and awe-inspiring lake or morass, which is said to be one hundred and thirty feet in depth and about one hundred and twenty-seven acres in extent, while its circumference measures about a mile and a half. The pitch seemed a solid black mass, mixed with oil and water, which I could knead in my hands, and of which I brought home a sizable piece. Occasionally we stopped while our colored guide, who for a shilling or two narrated all the idiosyncrasies of this wonder, poked his wooden wand into the bewitching soft mass. The pitch would then commence to hiss, and our feet, above this boiling inferno, occasionally would stick to the viscous mass. I beheld here and there some petrified tree trunks and branches, and I was told that there had been quite a few of these petrified trunks dug up already.

Laborers hack out the pitch in chunks, with pickaxes, and load them in buckets and then into cars. Owing to the fact that the pitch hardens rapidly, it is quickly dispatched by narrow-gauge railroad from the soft spot over the main body of the lake to the refinery. Here its moisture is evaporated and after reduction to a purer liquid state it is run through sluices to the barrel plant where, as it solidifies, it is chopped and packed into the barrels by a kind of endless-chain process. These barrels are manufactured in a modern plant by large crews of workers. The pitch hardens in the barrels, and great quantities of these barrels are piled up outside the barrel plant. Then they are sent swinging down an aerial ropeway to the Brighton pier to be stowed in ships' holds, en route to America and the rest of the world, where you and I even now may be walking on or inhaling the healthy odor of it on our asphalted streets, little realizing that it may have come from the inferno of la Brea Pitch Lake.

Since geologically there is a close connection between pitch and petroleum, it may not be out of place to interpolate here that Sir Walter may also have been responsible for the discovery of petroleum, for the island now has loomed up as a formidable producer of petroleum. Many writers have referred to the existence of petroleum on the island, including a Major Randolph

Rust, who some years ago drew the world's attention to that fact. I recall now as I write these lines that we stopped while at la Brea at an oil derrick which, we learned, was working night and day pumping oil. Even De Verteuil, as far back as 1858, mentioned petroleum being found. Various have been the attempts made at drilling for oil on a larger scale, until in 1910 the Trinidad Oil Fields Ltd. became established as an oil-producing company. But not before 1911 was the foundation stone laid for this important Trinidad fluid-gold mine, when a pipe line conveyed oil from la Brea to a steamer anchored at Brighton. That started the oil flowing, and today, at Fyazabad, right in the heart of the forest, is located the mainspring of the largest oil company in the island, Trinidad Leaseholds Ltd. Near here is another, the Apex Trinidad Oil Fields, whose many derricks pump up the oil that in no mean measure contributes to the prosperity of the island and gives employment to many white men, including a number of Americans.

Not wishing to close my notebook without devoting a few lines to nearby Tobago, I should like to say that this tropical isle at one time belonged to the Dutch and sported the almost unpronounceable name of Nieuw Walcheren (after its namesake in Zeeland, one of the Eleven Dutch Provinces). It then hoisted the French tricolor until it finally joined the great Commonwealth of the British West Indian Islands in 1814.

The tradition persists that Tobago was the island described by Defoe in 1719, and the inhabitants are said to believe in it staunchly, and for personal reasons. Sugar was for a long time the principal industry of the island, giving way to the cultivation of cocoa, coffee and cocoanuts, which have in later years become quite profitable. The island itself, like the rest of the West Indies, is delightful in its scenery. Its capital is Scarborough, rising on the shore of a bay where great battles were fought between the French and the British, and where even the Dutch Admiral Binks received a trouncing from a French admiral in 1667.

Looking back now on my many years of travel and asking myself what all this has brought me, I would say that it has influenced to a great extent my mode of thought. That is something that you

too will discover when you see the many interesting things that you will never see when you stay at home. You will undoubtedly gain aesthetic impressions; your eyes will become inured to, and your other senses and your spiritual horizon will become materially widened by, the immense wealth in the objects under comparison. You will learn things—many things hitherto strange to you—while relinquishing for a spell the companionship, the association of old friends and immediate relations. You will make new friends and meet human beings utterly foreign to you, who will receive you with extreme kindness. All of which will, as time progresses, enhance your belief in human nature and you will carry back with you an objectivity of view that will convince you that the mainsprings of life and character, whether they be here in America or in Europe, in the West Indies, or in Africa are the same in men and women the world over. You will also discover that the same passions and virtues, the same failings and good qualities keep on repeating themselves with endless variations. Thus, the final result of travel is that it widens our horizons and lends an immeasurable addition to our experience, which becomes of indefinable value to us for the rest of our lives.

Though it is true that travel enriches some people, it is equally true that it has only a superficial effect on others, so that later, when they have come home, they may have changed the clothes they wear but their outlook on life and nature has remained exactly the same. In a sense they have not broadened on the broad byways of the world.

It is really a healthy thing to leave your own shores, your own beloved ones, your own hearth once in a while, so that you may come back to them a wiser being, loving them better than when you left. It is true it behooves one to know one's own country first, but you will never know your own country better if you do not know its surrounding lands, in order to make comparisons, just as the merchant will never know the value of his wares unless he has a standard by which to judge their value.

The man who has never traveled is like a man incarcerated for life in a dungeon. He becomes imbued with his own stilted ego and becomes full of his own praises, remaining entirely ignorant of his own shortcomings and prejudices. In fine, when traveling near

or far you are bound to pick up something from it, just as the bird sucks in a stray insect in its flight.

There is so much to learn beyond one's own narrow meridian. A bird perched on a bough may only see the world that lies in all its beauty at its feet, once it has begun to fly to a higher strata in the sky.

Travel will undoubtedly release your purse-strings, but it will also release new emotions and open your heart. It will broaden your experience; it will enhance your human understanding. And if, in fine, you become a traveler in the true sense of the word, with that rare power of observation without which your trip might well have been taken into a dark cavern, where light can never seep in, you will come back loving your own land more than ever, because you will have learned to differentiate, you will have learned to tolerate, you will have learned to distinguish and to discriminate, and you will have learned to evaluate and to condone, to appreciate and to understand.

“For to admire, and for to see,
For to be'old this world so wide;
It never done no good for me
But I can't stop it if I tried.”

KIPLING.

And now, as I close my notebook at this very early morning hour (it is now one o'clock) of February 25th, in this year of Our Lord, 1937, I sincerely hope that I may have made my little contribution to the already so profusely filled chest of travel lore, and that you may find something of interest in these pages which will help you in your own traveling adventures.

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